God of War – Synopsis [WGA]

God of War chronicles the adventure of **Kratos**, former Greek God of War in exile, and his son **Atreus** as they journey through the legendary realms of Norse mythology to fulfill the last wish of the boy's mother, **Faye**—to scatter her ashes from the highest mountain in the realms.

Before setting out towards the great mountain of Midgard, Kratos tests the boy's readiness with a hunt—a test he fails when a chance encounter with a Troll sends him into a rage that brings on a latent childhood sickness. But after a belligerent **Stranger** with godlike powers arrives at their door and provokes a fight with Kratos, they set out on the road, ready or not.

They quickly discover that they had been living under a protection stave, and beyond it, the realm of Midgard has become a dangerous place full of mythic beasts and undead warriors. Trappings remain of a human civilization that worshipped the Norse gods—offerings to **Odin**, statues of **Thor**, and the Temple of the Norse God of War, **Týr**—but the Desolation has left the land almost devoid of people.

They make allies along the way, largely thanks to Atreus' openness and curiosity. They encounter two Dwarven master blacksmiths, the estranged brothers **Brok** (foulmouthed, irascible, and blue) and **Sindri** (fastidious and germophobic). In their former partnership, they crafted Mjölnir, the Hammer of Thor, and the **Leviathan Axe**, the very weapon now wielded by Kratos. They made it for Faye, and in her honor they each lend support to Kratos and Atreus on their journey.

They also encounter a **Witch of the Woods**, who teaches them how to use Týr's Temple to travel between the nine realms. When their path to the Mountain is blocked by a magical barrier, the Witch directs them to the realm of Alfheim. There, after navigating a dangerous path through a warzone of Light Elves and Dark Elves, they capture the Bifröst Light that can dispel the barrier.

When finally they reach the mountain's summit, they discover a man imprisoned in a tree there, being interrogated by the very Stranger whose appearance chased them from home. The prisoner is Mimir, a former advisor to (and now captive of) Odin, and the Stranger is revealed to be **Baldur** of the Aesir gods.

Once alone, Mimir breaks the news to Kratos and Atreus that the "highest peak" in the realms isn't in Midgard at all, but in **Jötunheim**, long-hidden realm of the so-called "**Giants**" (or *Jötnar*). Mimir offers his counsel and service to Kratos as their journey takes on this new destination—on the condition that Kratos "frees" Mimir by chopping off his head and finding a way to resurrect it.

The Witch of the Woods is able to bring back Mimir, and it turns out the two are no strangers... for the Witch is actually the goddess **Freya**, former leader of the Vanir gods, and Mimir is responsible for brokering her ill-fated marriage to Odin. Now, confined to Midgard and prevented from fighting by Odin's curse, she lives in exile as a mortal. Learning this strikes a nerve in Kratos, himself a god in exile, but one who has refused to tell his son about his true nature (or the shameful, bloody deeds of his past). Kratos, incensed that Freya did not divulge her godhood, angrily withdraws with Atreus and Mimir's Head to seek a way to reach Jötunheim and fulfill Faye's wish.

To discover a path to the lost realm of the Giants, Mimir first leads them to talk to **Jörmungandr**, the World Serpent, the last known Giant left in Midgard. Kratos and Atreus first encountered the serpent

when they arrived in the lake surrounding Týr's Temple, but they could not speak his language. In fact, none can except for Mimir. Jörmungandr tells them where to find the secret travel rune for Jötunheim and the magical chisel they need to carve it, and they embark on a quest to obtain them.

Along the way, they are attacked by **Magni and Modi**, sons of Thor and henchmen to their uncle Baldur. Modi taunts the boy to the point of rage (landing a bit close to home with repeated insults about his mother). Kratos kills Magni, but Modi survives long enough to ambush them later, provoking Atreus into a rage that triggers his sickness and leaves him at death's door.

Kratos swallows his pride and takes the boy to Freya to plead for help. Freya forgives him his distrust of gods, and tells Kratos the ingredient she needs to save the boy can be found only in Helheim, the frozen realm of the dead where the ice-powers of the Leviathan Axe will be useless. Resigned to digging up his past, Kratos returns home to retrieve his old weapons stashed there, the fiery Blades of Chaos.

Once Atreus is healed, Kratos heeds the advice of Freya and Mimir, and reveals his true nature to his son. However, he stops well short of coming clean about his past and the terrible mistakes that the boy could learn from. As a result of the half-truth, Atreus becomes arrogant in his godhood, disrespecting their allies, and finally defying his own father by executing a beaten and helpless Modi. They return to the Mountain summit with the needed elements, but they are in personal discord when Baldur again attacks. Baldur tries to kidnap Atreus on his dragon, but Kratos jumps on and a chaotic chase ensues.

Ultimately, they wind up back in Helheim, where ghostly visions of their misdeeds help Atreus regain perspective, and compassion for his father's burdens. They also learn of a connection that Mimir was bewitched not to reveal—that Freya is Baldur's mother, and that she is the creator of the spell that renders him indestructible but unable to feel anything.

Working once again as a team, Kratos and Atreus escape Hel, discover an even more secret path to Jötunheim, and stumble onto the weakness in Baldur's invulnerability. Even "cured" Baldur cannot forgive Freya and tries to kill her, but Kratos intervenes and kills Baldur, an act for which Freya swears terrible vengeance. Kratos explains to Atreus that they must break the cycle of godly children killing their parents and reveals the true extent of his atrocities in Greece, including killing his own father.

At last they open a gate to Jötunheim, leaving Mimir behind with a reunited Brok & Sindri, and they encounter a shrine for the Giants who fled Midgard. Atreus' touch reveals a hidden carving that predicted their entire journey. They learn that Faye herself was a Giant, and that she foresaw every step of the journey that would bring them here, even helping to set it in motion. At the peak, Kratos and Atreus spread Faye's ashes together, and puzzle over her intent, as well as the reason the Giants' prophecy refers to Atreus by another name—"**Loki**."

Upon returning to Midgard, they learn that Baldur's death has prematurely triggered Fimbulwinter, the beginning of a prophesied cycle leading to Ragnarök. Kratos and Atreus return home to rest, and Atreus has a vivid vision of a stormy night some years in the future, when Thor appears at their house.

GOD OF WAR

Santa Monica Studio

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God of War — WGA Edition

1. THE MARKED TREES

EXT. FOREST IÐUNN/NEAR RIVER BANK (MIDGARD) – DAWN

MAIN MENU SCREEN:

KRATOS stands solemnly amidst a Scandinavian forest. His eyes are fixed on a NORTHERN PINE, specifically on a GOLDEN HANDPRINT adorning the pale bark of the trunk.

The former God of War looks older. Tired. The storm of years has chipped away at his features: Wrinkles spiderweb out from his eyes, and his beard is brushed with grey. His skin remains ashen, save for the familiar RED TATTOO that begins below his left eye, winds over his hairless pate and around his arm and chest. Both of his arms are wrapped in BLOODSTAINED LINEN STRIPS. No other vestige remains of the Kratos we've known.

In one hand hangs an AXE.

The player selects New Game from the menu, and our story begins...

Kratos KNEELS next to the tree, and puts his fingers tenderly on the shining handprint, the size of a woman's hand. He leans his head against the trunk, and closes his eyes. He takes a DEEP BREATH before opening them again.

Kratos stands, takes a step back, and lifts the axe in his hands: THE LEVIATHAN. The blade is etched with an intricate network of grooves along the metal. This is no ordinary axe; it HUMS, coursing with mysterious power.

As Kratos chops away at the tree, he seems distracted, lost in thought. Each successive swing is more powerful, more intense, more *angry,* than the last... until he's swinging away with an emotional frenzy that goes well beyond the act of felling a tree. With one last mighty chop, his grunts of effort give way to a FRIGHTENING ROAR that echoes between the trees for a mile.

KRATOS
RAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!!

The tree CREAKS and falls, shaking the earth. Kratos stands looking at his handiwork: The trunk is fractured, but the largest intact piece is suitable for his purposes. He lets the rage pass through him and dissipate. He holsters the axe on his back, and steps forward to reach for the log.

Kratos stops, noticing a BLOODSTAINED LINEN STRIP hanging from his forearm, shaken loose during his loss of control, like a piece of him unraveling. He reaches for it... but then he pauses, closing his eyes, as if at risk of being overwhelmed. Anger he has learned to manage, however imperfectly... but grief and shame are another matter.

He opens his eyes again, and shakes his head as if embarrassed by his emotions, even when alone. He begins to tightly rewrap the bloody bandages around the wound that never heals.

ATREUS (O.S.)
I found some.

ATREUS, a PRE-ADOLESCENT BOY—pale, and slight for his age—EMERGES from between the trees, holding up a MISTLETOE SPRIG. Kratos turns away from him, as if he doesn't want the boy to see his wounds, and quickly finishes wrapping the bandages.

KRATOS
Get in the boat, boy.

His father's muted response dampens the boy's enthusiasm. He nods and runs down a path toward a nearby BOAT docked along a RIVER BANK.

Kratos turns back to the felled tree. He picks up the enormous WHITE LOG and lifts it over his shoulder with relative ease, a reminder of his unnatural strength. He quietly carries the log down the path to the river, where the two of them LASH the log to the waiting boat and begin to PADDLE downstream.

Dawn is coming. It's too early for songbirds and the only noise is that of small branches giving way, the crackling of ice, and the river. After a little while, the boy breaks the silence—

ATREUS
Father?

KRATOS
What?

ATREUS
Did something change? The forest feels *different* now.

KRATOS
Everything *is* different, boy. Try not to dwell on it.

ATREUS
Yes, sir.

They soon reach the dock near their home. Kratos uses the rope to pull the log into shore, then heaves the log onto his shoulder. They ascend a path away from the riverbed until they're in a forest clearing.

EXT/INT. FOREST IÐUNN/KRATOS' HOUSE (MIDGARD) – DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Ahead, a SMALL HOUSE at the upper edge of a clearing comes into view. KRATOS lays down the log beside a FUNERAL PYRE lined with large stones that bear the same GOLDEN HANDPRINT as the tree. He reaches for the axe on his back.

KRATOS
That was the last.

Atreus seems to understand what this means. He nods solemnly. As Kratos begins chopping the log down to size, WE FOLLOW ATREUS to their FRONT DOOR, framed with RUNIC SYMBOLS, where he pauses for a moment before walking inside.

Atreus lights a CANDLE and stands beside a SHROUDED BODY of a woman laid out on a rough table. The body is wrapped in rustic CLOTH, the color of Tiger's Eye, arms crossed over chest. Nestled around the head is a WREATH of purple flowers. Tucked in the wrappings is a small HUNTING KNIFE.

The boy quietly speaks a prayer as he leans over to light several candles surrounding the body.

ATREUS
Lo, there do I see my Mother,
Lo, there do I see my Father,
Lo, there do they call to me.

Atreus spreads MISTLETOE LEAVES over the body. Then, continuing the prayer, he lays his arm on the body and rests his head there.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
(repeating)
Lo, there do they call to me.
Lo, there do they call to me...

Eyes red with tears, Atreus looks behind him to see Kratos silhouetted in the doorway. As Kratos walks in, the boy quickly composes himself—pretending he wasn't crying.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
She's ready.

Atreus steps aside as Kratos approaches the body, leans down, and cradles it his arms.

KRATOS
(softly)
Find your way home. You are free.

He picks up the body and carries it outside, with Atreus following closely behind.

After placing the body on the pyre, Kratos strikes his AXE against a FLINT for a spark to start the flame. They step back and watch the quickly spreading fire. Atreus' eyes fix on the KNIFE tucked in the wrappings. Suddenly he reaches into the pyre to take the knife, its blade already glowing from the heat. It takes the boy a moment to feel the intense pain as his hand SIZZLES, and he drops the knife into the snow at his feet.

Kratos approaches, Atreus looking up at him with trepidation.

ATREUS
I'm sorry...

Kratos kneels and puts a SCOOP OF SNOW into the boy's red hand.

KRATOS
Squeeze.

He does as he's told, as Kratos unwraps a single layer of the wrappings that cover his own arms, and wraps it around Atreus' hand.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
This knife...

Kratos picks up the cooled knife and holds the handle out to the boy.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
It was hers.

Atreus looks at the knife, and up into his father's eyes.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Now it is yours.

Atreus accepts the knife with his unburned hand. He stares at it, and the burning pyre beyond, looking numb and sad. Kratos stands.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
She taught you to hunt?

ATREUS
What she knew.

KRATOS
Show me.

Atreus breaks his stare to give his father a quizzical look.

ATREUS
Now?

KRATOS
Now.

The boy hesitates for only a second, then stalks forward into the house for his gear.

Kratos returns his attention to the pyre. The flames continue to consume the body and Kratos takes a moment to himself to reflect on his loss.

Atreus returns holding a SMALL HUNTING BOW.

ATREUS
What're we hunting?

KRATOS
You are hunting deer.

The boy looks at the woods around him, uncertain.

ATREUS
Which way?

KRATOS
(deadpan)
In the direction of deer.

Atreus, a bit puzzled, tries to figure out which way to go—

ATREUS
Okay...? Uhh... this way.

—and he bolts away with determination.

Atreus runs ahead to the GATE outside their home and waits.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Father... why are we doing this now?

KRATOS
I need to know you can survive the journey.

ATREUS
Then we leave for the mountain?

KRATOS
Depends on you. Hunt.

As Kratos approaches, the boy jogs through the open gate.

EXT. FOREST IÐUNN/HUNTING TRAIL (MIDGARD) – DAY (CONTINUOUS)

As they walk, Atreus breaks stride for a moment, gazing down at something on the ground—

KRATOS (CONT'D)
What did you find?

ATREUS
Tracks. Not deer though. I'll keep looking.

The boy races off to look for more animal tracks. Kratos follows.

Further ahead, near the foot of a stone staircase, Atreus examines the snow-covered ground.

KRATOS
More tracks?

ATREUS
Yeah. But they're too round. Could be wild boar.

KRATOS
Your mother taught you well.

Atreus reflects for a moment at the thought of his mother. He misses her.

ATREUS
(sadly)
Yeah...

Up ahead, the boy stops in his tracks.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Wait.

He takes a few steps forward, looking at the ground.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Deer tracks. They're fresh.

He happily starts running in a direction, proud to be on top of things.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
This way.

Atreus leads Kratos into a forest of trees with golden leaves. Suddenly, a large deer trots into view, silhouetted by the bright sunlight behind it. The boy skids to a stop, face to face with the beast.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
(startled)
Aaah!

The deer quickly bolts away and Atreus regains his composure, chasing after it—

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Found it!

Kratos follows while calling out—

KRATOS
Slow down, boy!

On the path out of the golden forest, Atreus turns back to his father without breaking his stride.

ATREUS
(sheepishly)
Sorry...

KRATOS
(pointedly)
You are *hunting* deer—not chasing it.

ATREUS
(sheepishly)
Yes, father.

Arteus and Kratos arrive at a DAMAGED WOODEN BRIDGE. A gap in the boards could be jumped, if not for the collapsed plank debris just on the other side, knocked there by the passing deer.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
He broke our bridge... how are we gonna get across?

KRATOS

Step aside.

Kratos THROWS the Leviathan Axe at the debris, clearing them a path through it. Then, with only a lift of his arm, THE AXE RETURNS TO HIS HAND.

KRATOS (CONT'D)

Go.

The boy hops across the gap. Before Kratos can follow him, the deer walks into a clearing just ahead of them. Atreus can't contain his excitement.

ATREUS

There it is!

KRATOS
(hushed)

HOLD.

Overeager, Atreus quickly draws and fires, missing by a mile. The deer is startled and scampers off.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
(exploding)

What are you doing?!

He yanks the bow from the boy's hands.

KRATOS (CONT'D)

Now its guard is up! Only fire...
(composing himself)
Only fire when I tell you to fire.

ATREUS

I'm sorry...

KRATOS

Do not be sorry. Be better. Find it.

Atreus reaches for the bow, and Kratos holds it away.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
(through gritted teeth)

Find. It.

The boy stews, holding back the urge to direct his anger at this stranger who is his father. Instead, he races off to get back on the Deer's trail.

Out of nowhere, several DRAUGR jump out near Atreus, a few paces ahead of Kratos.

ATREUS
Ahh!

The boy scrambles away and the Draugr turns their attention to Kratos—

ATREUS (CONT'D)
My bow!

KRATOS
No! You are not ready—stay back!

Kratos fights off the undead soldiers. With the last one dispatched—

ATREUS
(alarmed)
Draugr? They've never come this close to our woods before.

KRATOS
Keep moving.

Atreus leads Kratos toward an old, ORNATE BRIDGE. As he ascends some stairs, the boy sees the DEER on a ridge across a frozen pond. The deer ducks around a corner, disappearing from view.

ATREUS
Up there! He went in the old temple. But mom told me never to go in there.

KRATOS
We go where we please, boy. No excuses.

Atreus stops at some enormous, carved DOORS to an OLD TEMPLE. Kratos forces them open and the boy runs inside. He sees something through a far archway and signals for Kratos to stop.

ATREUS
(whispers)
Look.

He motions Kratos over and we see the deer eating some grass beyond, unaware of them.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Can I have my bow back now?

KRATOS
(doubtful)
Can you hit it from here?

He thinks about it.

ATREUS
We should get closer.

As they descend a staircase into the main floor of the old temple—

ATREUS (CONT'D)
I went hunting with mother a bunch of times. You never wanted to take me. Why now?

KRATOS
It was her wish. And... it was time.

ATREUS
(nodding, appreciative)
Okay.

Atreus walks up to an overlook and spots the deer again—this time confident he has the right angle and distance. He motions for Kratos to come over.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
(whispers)
Father... look.

From a ridge, Kratos and Atreus watch the deer eating grass.

KRATOS
(to Atreus, hushed)
Wait for my mark... Relax. Do not think of it as an animal.

Kratos hands the bow back to the boy, who promptly raises it up to aim.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
(to Atreus, hushed)
It is simply a target. Clear your mind. Pick your spot and focus on it. Relax.

Atreus draws the bowstring.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
(to Atreus, hushed)
Feet solid. Steady your aim and breathe in. Exhale and release.

Atreus lets loose an arrow and it hits its mark.

ATREUS
I got it.

KRATOS
Good.

Atreus scrambles towards the body of the deer, and stops in his tracks.

ATREUS
It's... it's still alive.

As Kratos gets near, he sees Atreus struggling with what to do next.

KRATOS
Your knife...

The boy pulls out his hunting knife and, relieved, hands it to Kratos. Kratos does not take the knife.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
No. Finish what you started.

He prompts Atreus to finish the deer with a forceful nod.

The boy looks back at the shaking deer, trying to accept what he has to do.

He tries pushing the knife towards the deer, but he's shaking too badly. He holds it with both hands, as if to make himself do it... but it's no use. He looks at his father helplessly, and a little confused.

ATREUS
(as if just learning this about himself)

ATREUS (CONT'D)
I *can't*...

Kratos places his hands on the knife, over the boy's hands, steadying it. Atreus is almost alarmed at the sudden contact—it's a rare moment of intimate, physical contact between them.

The knife now moves inexorably down into the neck of the deer, who lets out a final, noisy shudder. Kratos lets go, and the Atreus pushes in the knife the rest of the way. The beast's heavy breathing stops, and all is suddenly still.

Atreus looks up at his father, but Kratos' eyes are staring off into the horizon. Perhaps a memory has stirred, or perhaps he's giving his Son some privacy to process his first kill.

ATREUS
(pleading)
I...

Atreus gives up on trying to connect, and turns away, hunching over his knee. Kratos finally looks over at him. His left arm raises, as if poised to pat his son's back or offer some gesture of comfort or reassurance. It hovers for a moment... and then pushes forward past the boy to collect the KNIFE from the Deer's hide. He offers it matter-of-factly to Atreus, who takes it. For comfort and reassurance, that will have to do.

Now they both look towards the horizon, overlooking their kill, in a tableau that is abruptly shattered by the MASSIVE HAND of a TROLL, reaching up from the ridge below them and grabbing the deer carcass before them with a hungry GROWL.

Atreus instinctively reacts, stabbing at the hand with a STARTLED SCREAM. The troll BACKHANDS him off the ridge for his effort.

KRATOS
Atreus!

Kratos side-steps a quick swipe from the troll's LEFT HAND, runs up his right arm and KICKS the monster square in the face—sending him crashing into a STONE PILLAR.

The troll, aggravated and a little dazed, discards the deer carcass and walks over to pick up his STONE TOTEM (a Troll's weapon of choice).

Kratos drops down into the clearing below, and hands Atreus his bow.

ATREUS
We're going to fight that?!?

KRATOS
We have no choice.

Kratos draws his axe, and they go into battle.

ATREUS
Okay—just tell me when to shoot!

During the fight, Atreus draws the troll's attention and takes some damage.

KRATOS
(concerned)
Boy!

ATREUS
(through gritted teeth)
I'm FINE. Kill it!

The fight continues. They go back and forth, pounding at each other, until the God of War gets the upper hand, killing the creature with a final swing of his axe.

As soon as the troll is finally killed and drops to the ground, Atreus jumps out with a SCREAM. He throws his bow aside—mind clouded with rage—and stabs at the body with his newly-inherited HUNTING KNIFE. It's been an emotional day, and all the uncertainty, and fear, and grief, comes pouring out of him.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
RAAAA! That's what you get!

KRATOS
Boy!

Kratos' call out doesn't even register with the boy.

ATREUS
Think I'm afraid of you?!

Atreus begins to COUGH an ugly, deep cough as he continues to lash out at the dead troll.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
You're nothing to me! NOTHING.

He COUGHS again. Kratos spins Atreus around, grabs him by the wrists, and looks him dead in the eyes.

KRATOS
BOY! Look at me! Look at me, boy!

He looks at Kratos as if for the first time... coming to his senses. Kratos releases the boy and he sheathes the hunting knife. The COUGHING starts again, but this time he suppresses it.

ATREUS
(panting)
We DID it.

Kratos stares at him for a moment, and then—

KRATOS
You are not ready.

ATREUS
What? Are you serious? I found the deer.

He turns away from Kratos, pulling an arrow from the dead troll.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
I proved myself. How am I not ready?

KRATOS
(ignoring his question)
We are going home.

He hands Atreus his bow, forcefully, then turns away and starts walking.

ATREUS
I haven't been sick in a long time. I can do this.

Kratos looks over his shoulder at the boy, a grave finality in his voice.

KRATOS
You are NOT ready.

Atreus is crestfallen—not wanting to believe it, fearing it might be true, not wanting to seem or feel as weak as he suddenly feels. As Kratos turns to leave, the boy tries to have the last word...

ATREUS
I AM ready.

KRATOS
Do not speak again.

They walk on in silence.

2. NOT READY

EXT. FOREST IÐUNN/RUINED GARDEN (MIDGARD) – DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Working their way home in sullen silence, Kratos and Atreus discover the troll had set fire to the garden kept by the boy's mother. There they encounter an UNDEAD SOLDIER very unlike the Draugr, armed and armored, closer in appearance to a living man, but with ICY BLUE TRANSLUCENT SKIN. Frost fills the air as it lunges for Kratos with its sword.

ATREUS
What IS that thing!?

Kratos deals with the strange attacker, but it's not the last unusual sight on their road home. Finally Atreus can't help pointing out the troubling signs—

ATREUS
I told you something was different about the forest.

KRATOS
And I told *you* not to speak.

ATREUS
But why would a Fire Troll burn mother's garden? And since when are Draugr so close to the house? And what was that frozen thing that attacked us?

KRATOS
I do not know. Now be silent—we are almost home.

EXT/INT. FOREST IÐUNN/KRATOS' HOUSE (MIDGARD) – DAY (CONTINUOUS)

When the player interacts with the door to the house—

KRATOS
Inside, boy.

Kratos steps to the side and Atreus storms past. Kratos lingers for a moment and walks over to the funeral pyre. The flame is now gone and only a light smolder remains.

He kneels down and tenderly collects the ashes into a SMALL LEATHER POUCH, ringed with an ornate hand-stitched pattern in gold. He gives it a long, mournful look before carefully placing it along a loop on his belt and walking into the house, shutting the door behind him.

Atreus is sitting on his COT in the corner, shoulders slumped, muttering to himself quietly.

ATREUS
(under his breath)
It's not fair... He doesn't know anything... Why did I expect it to be any different now that she's...?

Atreus SIGHS, and trails off at that sad thought. Kratos approaches, towering over him.

KRATOS
You lost control.

ATREUS
That thing was trying to kill us. It's not like *you* don't get angry in a fight.

KRATOS
Anger can be a weapon, *if* you control it—*use* it. You clearly cannot. When you lose—

ATREUS
I haven't been sick in a long time. I'm better now.

Kratos kneels down in front of Atreus.

KRATOS
Fine.

He raises his hands up, palms forward, motioning for Atreus to throw a punch.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Come on then.

ATREUS
You want me to hit you?

KRATOS
I want you to try.

Atreus throws a light, half-hearted JAB at his father's right palm. Kratos SLAPS it away forcefully with his left before the boy's punch can land. Atreus WINCES and SHAKES his stinging hand.

ATREUS
OWWW! What are you—?

KRATOS
(calmly)
Try again.

Atreus throws another punch—this time more seriously. But the result is the same. Kratos slaps it out of the air with a CRACK.

ATREUS
Why are you doing that?

KRATOS
(ignoring the question)
Too slow. Try again.

Another punch, another SLAP.

ATREUS
Cut it out!

KRATOS
Weak. Again.

Punch, SLAP.

KRATOS
Again.

ATREUS
(angry)
STOP IT!

KRATOS
AGAIN.

Atreus loads up his fist and swings wildly, and this time Kratos shifts his shoulders and moves out of the way, causing Atreus to tumble clumsily to the floor. He sits there, coughing, dejected and embarrassed.

Kratos moves over and lifts Atreus off of the floor by the arm, perhaps more roughly than he intends. He holds onto the arm as the boy finds his feet. They lock eyes—the father stoic, the son glaring.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Your anger... you can get lost in it. The path ahead is difficult—

Atreus tries to turn away, but Kratos tugs him back in to finish his point.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
...and you, Atreus, are clearly not ready.

Kratos releases his arm. Atreus pulls it away defiantly, if too late—by reflex or for show.

Suddenly, their confrontation is interrupted by a loud WHOOSHING sound overhead. The wooden roof RATTLES noisily.

ATREUS
What was that?

KRATOS
(whispers)
QUIET.

Outside, the sound of RUSTLING tree branches is followed by a loud THUD, like something heavy hitting the ground nearby. A moment later, Kratos and Atreus hear the ROAR of some large creature, and the FLAPPING sound of big, leathery wings taking flight.

After that, a POUNDING on the door, and unknown male voice, shouting—

STRANGER (O.S.)
Come on out! No use hiding anymore. I know who you are...

Kratos walks stealthily towards the door.

ATREUS
(whispers)
What's going on? Do you know him?

Kratos, not even sure of the answer to that, places a hand on the door and listens intently.

STRANGER (O.S.)
(shouting)
...more importantly, I know *what* you are!

At that, Kratos turns decisively to his son—

KRATOS
(whispers)
Boy. Beneath the floor. Now...

ATREUS
(whispers)
But... you told me never to go down there. Who *is* that?

KRATOS
I do not know.

Kratos races over to a BEAR SKIN RUG nearby and flips it back revealing a TRAP DOOR, which he hurriedly lifts open to reveal a CRAWLSPACE underneath the house.

ATREUS
What's he talking about?

KRATOS
I do not know. Get IN.

The boy obeys. Once Atreus is safely in the crawlspace, Kratos closes the trapdoor, replaces the rug, and begins to walk toward the door.

STRANGER (O.S.)
Just tell me what I want to know! No need for this to get bloody.

Kratos pauses at the door, and thinks for a moment about drawing his axe... but decides not to escalate things needlessly.

As Kratos opens the door, the camera settles into a "gunslinger duel" shot. It's low and slightly behind Kratos' hip—the bag containing the MOTHER'S ASHES hanging from Kratos' belt is large in frame.

Several strides ahead, we see THE STRANGER. In the sudden sunshine, he is the only discernable shape—standing tall, bathed in blinding white light.
Kratos steps out of the house towards the Stranger. His features come into focus— 33, bare-chested and covered in tattoos (many of them Runic). A scruffy beard, beaded in several spots. His posture carries a bravado that masks a hint of sadness behind his eyes.

As Kratos arrives in front of him, we can see that Kratos holds the size advantage handily. The Stranger is muscular enough, but wiry, and a full head shorter than the God of War.

The Stranger looks Kratos' imposing figure up and down, with a quizzical expression.

STRANGER
Huh. I thought you'd be bigger. But you're definitely the one.

The Stranger's lips curl into a smirk, a man deeply sure of himself who's ready to start some trouble.

STRANGER (CONT'D)
Long way from home, aren't you?

KRATOS
What do you want?

STRANGER
Oh, you already know the answer to that.

The Stranger looks at him as if Kratos should know who he is and what he's talking about. That look is met with only confusion.

KRATOS
Whatever it is you seek, I do not have it. You should move on.

Kratos turns his back to walk towards the house. He stops when The Stranger lets out a sudden LAUGH.

STRANGER
And here I thought your kind was supposed to be so enlightened. So much better than us. So much smarter. And yet you hide out here in the woods—like a coward.

Kratos takes a step toward the Stranger.

KRATOS
You do not want this fight.

The Stranger leans in closely, stroking his beard as if to pantomime deep thought.

STRANGER
Oh... I'm pretty sure I do.

With his gesturing hand, he suddenly BACKHAND-SLAPS Kratos across the face.

The old fire lights up in Kratos' eyes—his fist instinctively balls up. But this is not the old Kratos. He's wiser and knows when he's being goaded into a fight. He EXHALES deeply and relaxes his fist.

KRATOS
(through gritted teeth)
Leave my home.

STRANGER
You are going to have to kill me for that to happen.

The Stranger responds with a series of hard punches. Kratos CATCHES the fourth one in his left hand, and bends back the Stranger's arm to put him in a vulnerable position.

KRATOS
I warned you—

STRANGER
Finally...

The Stranger EXHALES with a big sigh of relief, waiting for whatever the big man can dish out. Kratos rears back with his right hand and PUNCHES him hard in the jaw—sending the Stranger tumbling backwards to the ground.

KRATOS
You would not listen.

Kratos looks back at the house, as if instinctually checking to be sure his son isn't seeing this. He looks back at the Stranger, and SIGHS in disappointment, wishing he hadn't been pushed into the fight.

The Stranger remains on his knees, doubled over and muttering.

STRANGER
No... no, no, no, no....

As Kratos walks toward him, it becomes subtly clear that he's not doubled over in pain... only in crushing disappointment. Kratos grabs the Stranger's arm to help him to his feet.

STRANGER (CONT'D)
Fine. My turn.

The Stranger launches a HUGE UPPERCUT, which sends Kratos FLYING into the air, skipping across the roof of his house, and hurdling helplessly to a rough and clumsy landing in his backyard. Kratos pulls his face out of the mud, the realization that this is no ordinary man now thoroughly dawned on him.

He looks behind him to see the Stranger on the roof of his house, VAULTING in his direction. Kratos rolls out of the way just before the Stranger lands in a powerful knee-drop attack. They square off—

STRANGER (CONT'D)
How incredibly disappointing. Come on, then.

They begin to slug it out. The Stranger grabs Kratos, leaps high into the air with him, and SLAMS into the overhanging ROOF of the HOUSE. The Stranger, straddling Kratos, unleashes a flurry of PUNCHES.

STRANGER (CONT'D)
Tell me what I want. Pain stops. Real simple.

The impact of the repeated blows SMASHES OPEN a section of the roof. Below, the RUG-COVERED TRAP DOOR is visible, and Kratos can't help but give it a concerned glance. The Stranger notices something else—

STRANGER (CONT'D)
Why are there two beds in there?

Kratos ROARS and reverses positions, rolling The Stranger down to a part of the roof hanging over an exterior dry storage area. Kratos, now on top, begins his own flurry of PUNCHES. He begins to shout with each impact for emphasis—

KRATOS
(shouting)
LEAVE! MY! HOME!

The final blow causes them to CRASH through the roof overhang to the ground below.

The Stranger recovers quickly, throwing Kratos all the way into the yard behind his house.

BALDUR
(shouting)
Struck a nerve, did I?!

The Stranger charges and Kratos picks up a TREE TRUNK lying nearby—collateral damage from the first part of their fight. When the Stranger gets close, Kratos SWINGS the trunk, batting him back across the yard and CRASHING into the rake of the roof.

The Stranger slides awkwardly off the roof. Kratos races toward him, catches him without breaking his stride and plows through everything in their path, including multiple beams under the roof overhang.

STRANGER
(shouting)
Who are you hiding?!

The Stranger slams down on Kratos with both fists, sending him to the ground in a heap.

STRANGER (CONT'D)
Slow and old. You should have never come to Midgard.

He stands over Kratos, and we see all of his wounds rapidly and spontaneously HEAL themselves.

STRANGER (CONT'D)
(takes a deep breath to recover)
So... care to try again?

Kratos speaks as he stands up to attack.

KRATOS
You talk too much.

He begins to POUND on the man's face. The Stranger reverses out of it—he was playing possum all along. He unleashes a quick, powerful flurry of PUNCHES, eventually punching Kratos through a rock.

STRANGER
You won't talk? Fine. Maybe whoever it is you've got stashed in that house will.

The player's RAGE METER is full and flashing.

Kratos lets out a HUGE ROAR, CRASHES through the collapsed rock, grabs the Stranger by the throat and SLAMS him into a TREE. He repeatedly BASHES him into the tree until it's about to fall.

Kratos tosses the Stranger aside and RIPS what's left of the TREE free of the ground, RAMMING the end into him. Not breaking stride, they CRASH through BOULDERS and EARTH, racing into a new area in the shadow of a MASSIVE STONE MONOLITH with ornate carvings.

STRANGER (CONT'D)
Who is it?! Who are you afraid I'll find?!
WHAM! Kratos rams him into the monolith. The Stranger jams his fingers into the cracks of the tree trunk and TEARS it in half.

STRANGER (CONT'D)
Let's find out.

Kratos leaps up and pulls on the monolith with everything he has. It gives way, toppling down on top of the Stranger, seemingly crushing him underneath. It's over.

Kratos turns and begins a slow, painful walk back to the house. Every step is agony—each breath labored. A LOW RUMBLE causes Kratos to stop.

STRANGER (O.S, CONT'D)
Leaving so soon? We're not done yet.

The monolith lifts off the ground, with the Stranger underneath it, holding it above his head. He THROWS it, and it EXPLODES into smaller rocks on Kratos' shield.

Kratos and the Stranger charge each other and LOCK UP—neither of them willing to give ground. Instead, it's the ground beneath their feet that begins to give. The earth itself separates, sliding apart as their grappling RIPS a crevasse beneath them.

STRANGER
When Odin sent me here, I just needed answers, but YOU had to act all proud. Throw whatever you have at me... I'll keep coming. That old body *will* give out. But before I end this, I want you to know one thing...

The Stranger leans in closer, a wild look in his eyes—

STRANGER (CONT'D)
I can't feel *any* of this.

He launches Kratos into the air with an UPPERCUT, then leaps after him to continue fighting in mid-air. The Stranger gets the better of it, STOMPING on Kratos and sending him deep into the crevasse.

Kratos drives his axe into the side of the mountain to slow his momentum, and then proceeds to climb up the resulting crack. As he ascends, the Stranger taunts him from above—

STRANGER (CONT'D)
You've seen it with your own eyes; you can't hurt me. Nothing can. This fight is pointless. Your struggle is pointless.

Kratos finally reaches the top and climbs out.

STRANGER (CONT'D)
(sighing)
Pathetic.

The Stranger kicks Kratos to the other side of the gap they've created.

STRANGER (CONT'D)
(calling from across the gap)
You can't win. I feel nothing, but you... you feel everything. Yet you keep trying. I'm not my brother. If you'd given me what I wanted, it wouldn't have ended this way. But no...

The Stranger launches himself across the gap. Kratos dodges, and the two face off again.

STRANGER (CONT'D)
Let's finish this.

Kratos tackles the Stranger, sliding behind him, and locking him up in a reverse chokehold.

STRANGER (CONT'D)
(strained)
I'd hoped that you, of everyone I'd faced, would finally make me feel something. But you can't.

Kratos shifts his grip—WRENCHING on his head trying to snap his neck.

STRANGER (CONT'D)
C'mon... DO IT!

The Stranger's neck finally SNAPS, and his body goes limp. Kratos, exhausted, rolls the man's body into the open crevasse.

Kratos SIGHS DEEPLY, his mind turning from the fight itself to the implications of it. He grunts in pain and frustration as he rises to his feet and begins the slow walk back to the house.

KRATOS
(to himself, labored, mind racing)
Who was he? He knew me. Did he know my past? How did they find me... after all this time?

He stumbles in the snow, and his muscles and tissues mend. The AXE returns to his grip, but he can only drag it behind himself.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Faye... what do I do? Our son is not ready... to carry your ashes... to the top of the mountain.

He pauses and admits something he hadn't said out loud until now...

KRATOS (CONT'D)
And neither am I. I do not know... how to do this without you.

Kratos arrives at his house, stopping for a moment at the door.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
(pulling it together)
But we cannot stay here...

He pushes it open and enters, hurrying to the trapdoor. He throws back the rug and pries it open.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Boy.

Atreus is there, knees pulled closely to his chest, wiping away the last few tears clinging to his face.

ATREUS
There was so much... I thought...

The boy steels himself, happy he's no longer alone.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
(relieved)
You're all right.

Kratos musters up the reassurance Atreus needs to hear at that moment—

KRATOS
I am all right. Come.

Holding up the trap door with one hand, he offers the other and Atreus grabs hold of it. Kratos easily lifts him out of the crawlspace.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Gather your things. We are leaving.

Atreus scampers off to grab his bow and other gear.

ATREUS
Thought I wasn't ready.

KRATOS
You are not, but we have no choice now.

He shuts the trap door and pulls the bear skin rug back into place.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
(almost to himself)
Prove me wrong.

ATREUS
(with resolve)
Yes, sir.

As Kratos and Atreus exit the door to their home, the SNOW-COVERED MOUNTAIN that is their goal, looms in the distance.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
The mountain... it's gonna be a LONG trip.

KRATOS
Yes. But an important one.

On the path outside the house, Atreus sees the mass amounts of damaged caused by the fight between the Stranger and his father.

ATREUS
Whoa—? How did *this* happen?

Kratos says nothing.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Who was he?

KRATOS
I do not know.

As they descend into through the newly formed crevasse—

ATREUS
What did he want with us? We're nobodies.

No answer comes.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Did you kill him?

KRATOS
I did what had to be done.

EXT. FOREST IÐUNN/ROAD TO RIVER PASS (MIDGARD) – DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Until this point, leaving the comfort of the forest around their house was only theoretical to Atreus. But now, as they travel to the mountain, the danger becomes all too real.

ATREUS
You've had to kill people before, haven't you? You're used to it.

KRATOS
We do what we must to survive.

ATREUS
Animals, I get. They're food. Draugr... they're supposed to be dead. But people... they're trying to survive too.

KRATOS
Close your heart to it. On our journey, we will be attacked by all manner of creature. Close your heart to their desperation. Close your heart to their suffering. Do not allow yourself to feel for them. They will not feel for you.

ATREUS
I understand.

They exit the climb and find themselves in the mouth of a CAVE. Atreus spies a HANGING BUCKET—

ATREUS (CONT'D)
That hanging bucket... an offering cask? Mother said Odin's disciples fill them with gifts and hang them where thieves can't reach them. That one looked really old.

KRATOS
Foolish...

ATREUS
What is? Worshipping the gods?

KRATOS
The gods care nothing for them. Men should not pray to monsters.

Climbing out of the cave—

ATREUS
Father... will we see others on the road?

KRATOS
Yes.

ATREUS
Friendly?

KRATOS
No.

ATREUS
They'll try and rob us?

KRATOS
Possibly.
(opting for honesty)
Yes.

ATREUS
(disappointed)
Oh...

As Kratos reaches the top, Atreus vaults off his back and runs ahead to the edge of a cliff that overlooks the valley of the Forest Iðunn. Looking down, they can see their house in the distance... and in the woods around the house, a RUNIC SYMBOL is visible, comprised of the GLOWING FOLIAGE of magical trees. The massive shape spans the forest canopy.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
(fascinated)
Look...

Atreus outlines the shape of the runic symbol with his finger.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
All this time... there's been a protection stave around our entire woods.

The boy notices something troubling, closer to them in the valley below.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
But... the stave's broken there.

A section of the runic stave is missing magical trees, interrupting the line of the stave.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Did *you* cut those down?

KRATOS
(puzzled)
She hand-marked the trees she wished used for her pyre...

ATREUS
(confused)
Why'd she do *that*?

Kratos gives the forest one last look before abruptly turning away to continue up the path.

KRATOS
Come. No looking back now.

Atreus follows him.

3. THE DANGERS OF THE ROAD

EXT. RIVER PASS/OUTSKIRTS (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Kratos and Atreus leave behind the safety of the Forest Iðunn, finding an entrance to a small cave nearby. They squeeze into a small pass between two rock walls, and shimmy toward sunlight peeking through ahead.

ATREUS
So... how long will it take to get to the mountain?

KRATOS
I do not know.

ATREUS
Before winter falls?

KRATOS
(growing impatient)
I do not know...

ATREUS
(not wanting to offend)
Okay, okay...

Approaching a clearing, several Draugr patrol the area without noticing Kratos and Atreus.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
(whispers)
They don't see us. Should I fire?

KRATOS (CONT'D)
(whispers)
Wait for my mark.

Atreus waits, and follows Kratos' lead. After the battle is over—

ATREUS
How was that? Did I help?

KRATOS
If you want to help, distract them. Whoever is not my focus should be yours... but only when safe to do so.

ATREUS
(confident, but not cocky)
I can do that.

They approach some ANCIENT RUNES etched on a BOULDER.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Look there...

Atreus runs up to the rune and reads it.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
There's a Jötnar settlement ahead...

KRATOS
Jötnar?

ATREUS
Giants.

KRATOS
(realizing)
You can read the writing?

ATREUS
Some—just the languages mother knew. But they're all sort of connected so sometimes I can feel my way through stuff I shouldn't know. Ya know?

After another skirmish with stray Draugr—

ATREUS
Anything else?

KRATOS
Space your shots. Speed costs accuracy.

ATREUS
Got it.

The only path ahead is across a DILAPIDATED BRIDGE hanging over a LARGE PIT.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
(excitedly)
There's the mountain! Let's go!

KRATOS
Not yet!

Running across the bridge—

ATREUS
It's fine! See?

Midway across, he falls through crumbling boards—

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Aaah! Father, help!

KRATOS
Hang on!

Kratos slowly makes his way towards a dangling Atreus as the fragile bridge CREAKS around him. Just as Kratos gets to him, the bridge COLLAPSES. As they fall, Kratos wraps Atreus in his arms and takes the brunt of the fall on his back. Thankfully, it's not a long drop and they recover quickly.

ATREUS
Huh... that wasn't so bad.

KRATOS
SLOW DOWN. Your haste will cost us.

ATREUS
(sheepishly)
Sorry...

They realize they are surrounded by SEVERAL DRAUGR who stand before them without moving.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Uh... more Draugr. But these aren't moving. Are they dead? I mean... *more* dead?

Atreus approaches them for a closer look—

KRATOS
(warning)
Booooy...

—and multiple Draugr spring to life. Atreus falls back, startled.

ATREUS
Not dead! Not dead!

During the fight—

KRATOS
Remember: Accuracy over speed!

After fighting the creatures—

ATREUS
That was the last one. Was I better?

KRATOS
Take even more time. It does not matter if you fire only once. Show me control.

They discover another ANCIENT RUNE CARVING—

ATREUS
Oh... This used to be a marketplace. The Giants used to gather here to trade with the gods a long time ago. Wonder if Odin was ever here...

As Kratos climbs a wall-crack with Atreus on his back, the boy's mind wanders—

ATREUS (CONT'D)
I still don't understand why that man attacked you at our house.

KRATOS
I told you, boy, I know nothing more of it.

EXT/INT. RIVER PASS/REAVER HIDEOUT (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

As they cross a bridge into a unknown structure—

ATREUS
Earlier... you said people might try and rob us. I'll kill them if they try. I'm not afraid.

KRATOS
If we encounter men, you will stay out of it, understand?

ATREUS
But... I can fight now.

KRATOS
You will stay out of it, boy. Speak no more of this.

Kratos and Atreus approach a LARGE CLOSED GATE with many corpses piled in front of it.

ATREUS
(apprehensive)
All these Dead... you think it's safe in there?

KRATOS
You think it safer out here?

Kratos heaves open the gate, and they pass into a DECAYING STONE CHAMBER.

ATREUS
Echh... What's that smell?

Suddenly, a VOICE RINGS OUT offscreen—

REAVER #1 (O.S.)
NOW!!

The gate SLAMS SHUT behind KRATOS and his son, trapping them in the chamber.

A FILTHY MAN APPEARS from behind a nearby COLUMN. He looks desperate, feral.

REAVER #1
Are they Hel-Walkers?

ANOTHER MAN appears from another area—equally mad, equally feral—eyes wild with hunger.

REAVER #2
They're untouched! Look!

MORE MEN appear, scrambling out from under RUINS, dropping down from SCAFFOLDING. They start to menacingly surround Kratos and Atreus.

REAVER #3
Someone start the fires!

REAVER #1
Siegmund, your knives!

REAVER #3
So many days... without meat.

Atreus turns to his father, his eyes saucer-wide in horror.

ATREUS
Meat? Wait—us?

KRATOS
Behind me.

The boy scampers for cover behind his father.

REAVER #1
What if they change like the others?

REAVER #3
We'll have to keep them alive. Strip off their meat... a little at a time.

Kratos has heard enough, and pulls out the LEVIATHAN AXE.

KRATOS
(to Atreus, over his shoulder)
This fight is mine alone.

Atreus NODS EAGERLY and SCURRIES OFFSCREEN. Kratos faces the surrounding horde. Atreus stays out of the fight, but stands in a defensive stance with his knife drawn.

Kratos makes quick work of the reavers. But while he grapples with the last of them, he turns to see one last REAVER jump from a hiding place to grab Atreus from behind. Before Kratos can react, Atreus blindly stabs at the man behind him, on pure instinct.

A GUSH OF DARK BLOOD erupts from the man's throat, as he drops Atreus to the ground. He staggers and quickly keels over on top of the boy, leaving him horribly face to face with the corpse of his first human kill. Atreus freezes, immobilized by shock and the weight of the body.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Atreus!

Kratos runs over and pulls the body off the dumbstruck boy, helping him to his feet. A small stripe of the man's BLOOD is streaked across the child's cheek. Kratos kneels, eye to eye with him, and places his

left hand on his shoulder. Atreus won't make eye contact with his father. Kratos says nothing, looking at him with compassion—a patient look of understanding from a fellow brother in arms.

He places his right hand on Atreus' other shoulder, but the shell-shocked boy doesn't even recognize his father is there. Kratos puts both hands behind the boy's head, and gently tilts his head up to make eye contact. Atreus sees him as if for the first time. His expression changes from shock to grief.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
(softly)
Close your heart to it.

Atreus doesn't process it immediately, but then the words begin to sink in. He masters himself, taking a DEEP BREATH. He gives his father a firm nod to show he's okay.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Come then. We have a long journey ahead—

Suddenly, they are set upon by a Hel-Walker—specifically, the reaver that Atreus just slew. His skin now has an otherworldly blue glow... but the boy's knife is still protruding from his neck. Kratos grabs the knife and twists it loose, killing him for a second time.

Out of the corner of his eye, Kratos sees some movement. Not one, but *all* of the dead reavers are crawling to their feet, their skin an ICY TRANSLUCENT BLUE like the creatures they've seen on the road. The chamber just got a whole lot colder.

Kratos hands the knife back to his son.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Wait here. I will handle this.

Once Kratos has dispatched the HEL-WALKERS—

ATREUS
They came back. Th-they came b-back...

KRATOS
It is finished.

ATREUS
(numbly)
I want to leave here.

KRATOS
(gently)
Then collect yourself. We must find a way out.

But Atreus doesn't move. He just stands in place, staring at the floor.

Kratos searches the area and finds a crawlspace the boy can be boosted into.

KRATOS
Here. Go drop the chain.

ATREUS
(numbly)
Okay.

Atreus climbs up and crawls through, takes a few tentative steps, then stops and stares at the floor.

The player must press Son Interact button to trigger—

KRATOS
Atreus... the chain.

ATREUS
The chain, right.

He talks a couple of steps towards the rope and stops, lost in his own world. He waits there.

With another press of Son Interact button—

KRATOS
You are in your head, boy. Let it go. He would have killed you.

He takes a few steps forward as he talks, and then trails off in his own world again.

ATREUS
I know. I had to do it—I do know that. It's just...

When the player presses Son interact button a third time—

KRATOS
(taking a different tack)
Then we will go home, boy.

ATREUS
(alarmed)
What?

KRATOS
(disappointed)
To give up this easily, so close to the start...

His words strike a chord, and Atreus snaps out of it, walking directly to the rope.

ATREUS
Wait, no, I'm not giving up. I can do this. I just have to... you know... catch my breath.

He drops the rope down.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Come on up. I'm ready.

As they perform a wall-press to exit the area—

KRATOS
Listen to me... To be effective in combat, a warrior must not feel for his enemy. The road ahead is long and unforgiving... no place for a boy. You must be a warrior.

ATREUS
I understand.

4. THE BLACKSMITH AND THE BOAR

EXT. RIVER PASS/CHASM BRIDGE (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Kratos and Atreus turn a corner and discover a large, rickety, ROPE BRIDGE stretching over a gully. Blocking the path, right in the middle of the bridge, is a huge MYTHOLOGICAL PACK ANIMAL. She's overloaded with HEAVY PACKS and METALWORKING GEAR.

BROK, a small, BLUE MAN—just a little taller than the boy—yells at the beast of burden—

BROK
Get up and move your ass! I'll kick you square in the ringer, you don't move it!

Brok notices Kratos and Atreus.

BROK (CONT'D)
(to Kratos)
Can't get this sloe-eyed cocklump to cross the bridge!

ATREUS
It's because she's scared of something in the trees over there.

BROK
There's *what* now?

ATREUS
(to Kratos)
Father, throw your axe at those trees on the other side of the bridge—the ones with the white trunks.

Kratos throws the LEVIATHAN AXE into the BIRCH TREE with a LOUD *STUMPF!* A GROWL and a rustling sound are heard, as some creature is scared away—then silence. KRATOS recalls the axe, and it flies back into his hand.

KRATOS
(surprised)
You were right...

The PACK ANIMAL stands, ready to cross the bridge.

BROK
Say... You must be smart or somethin', boy.
(rhetorical aside)
You are a boy, aren't ya? HYAA!

Brok SLAPS the animal's backside to get her to start walking, but she doesn't move.

ATREUS
She have a name?

BROK
Dunno. Rude bastard ain't ever asked *mine* so I ain't ever asked *hers*. HYAA!!

Brok gives her an even bigger SLAP across the rear, but she still doesn't move.

ATREUS
What's yours?

BROK
Brok.

Atreus gives the beast a quick pet, and leans in to speak to it.

ATREUS
(tenderly)
Vera logn...
(translation, do not subtitle)
Stay calm.

The slow-moving animal starts walking across the bridge—followed by Atreus, Kratos, and Brok.

BROK
Huh.
(to Kratos)
Say, you ain't gonna believe me but... that axe you got? It was *me* what made her—me and my brother. Was one of our best. So don't let nobody else go work on her 'cept for us two. You gotta handle her special, or she'll wreck beyond fixing. I can enhance her for you right now if it so pleases, you son of a bitch.

Kratos stops walking, and assesses this strange blue character for a moment. Brok gives the beast a final slap towards his campfire, as Kratos turns to walk away.

BROK (CONT'D)
So what say you? HYAA!!

KRATOS
You are right... I do not believe you. Come, boy...

BROK
There's a rune in the shape of a fork—under the grip.

Kratos stops. He pulls out his axe, and examines it. Brok curses in Dwarvish while setting up shop in the background.

BROK (CONT'D)
Aw... *digr bikkja! Dumbr bak-rauf!*
(to Kratos)

BROK (CONT'D)
That was our brand, my brother and me, before we split. I got half of it right here, see?

He pulls out a BRANDING IRON from one of the beast's packs, and holds it up to the rune on the bottom of the axe grip. It matches perfectly... but only one side.

BROK (CONT'D)
Look, you want I should upgrade her or not?

Kratos, hands over the axe—still skeptical, but detecting no danger from the dwarf.

KRATOS
Very well. I expect an improvement.

Brok leads the way back towards the beast.

ATREUS
So where's the other half of the brand?

BROK
Oh, my dumb brother's got it. But I got all the talent. Look!

For the first time we enter a DWARVEN SHOP.

As soon as the SHOP TUTORIAL ENDS and the UI closes, Kratos is attacked by the DRAUGR who were hiding in the trees earlier.

BROK
Well, don't look now but our friends who were hiding in the trees are back for more! Go on, give that axe a twirl!

Atreus runs for cover behind Brok's shop.

ATREUS
Got room for me behind there?

BROK
S'long as you don't break nothing.

He hides, watching from the sidelines for the rest of the fight.

During the fight, Brok yells out to Kratos from behind his shop. After the first kill—

BROK (CONT'D)
(shouting over distance)
Y'see?! See what my touch brung?

KRATOS
(shouting over combat)
Adequate!

BROK
(insulted, shouting over distance)
"Adequate" he says...! You know what's adequate? That *footwork.* You step in shit?

Once the fight is over, Atreus comes out of hiding.

BROK
Say, your pa can KILL. You gonna learn to do that too?

ATREUS
I'm not sure...

Lingering further—

ATREUS
Brok...

BROK
Fuck *else* you need...?

ATREUS
How come your brother's got half your brand?

BROK
'Cause I ain't in a workin' relationship with that foot-licker n'more, see? I wasn't about to let him use it without me, and he likewise—only thing to do was split

BROK (CONT'D)
the brand, fifty-fifty, down the middle. Guess that was the last thing we saw eye-to-eye on.
(awkward pause)
What, you want a hug? Hit the road!

ATREUS
Sorry!

Lingering further—

BROK
Be *extry* careful out there, you two. The roads are teeming with more'n the usual complement of dead assholes lately.

ATREUS
We've noticed. Any idea where they're coming from?

BROK
Maybe they ran outta rooms in Hel. Or could be Odin stirring up trouble again. Or maybe they all got lost. Why don't you ask one while he's chewin' your face off?

ATREUS
Uh... we'll just be careful.

BROK
Thought so.

As they're leaving Brok's shop, heading towards the gate ahead—

KRATOS
Come.

ATREUS
It was nice meeting you, Brok. I'll be thinking of a name for your beast.

BROK
(shouting over distance)
How 'bout I name her "fucking gratitude"?

BROK (CONT'D)
(to the beast)
Hey! Fucking Gratitude—come over here!
BROK (CONT'D)
(back to Atreus)
I like it!

As they crouch through a cave, Kratos speaks up.

KRATOS
You left me to fight alone.

ATREUS
(ashamed)
I did.

KRATOS
People are one thing. Everything else, you fight... until I say stop or we are dead. Understand? Pull your weight or we go home.

It's tough-love the kid needs to hear.

ATREUS
(rising to the challenge)
I understand.

KRATOS
Good then.

EXT. RIVER PASS/CANYON OVERLOOK (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Kratos and Atreus emerge from the canyons to an OVERLOOK. They take a moment to survey the landscape. In the distance looms the MOUNTAIN PEAK... their destination. The boy gloomily looks out at the vista.

ATREUS
Wow. Never been this close to the mountain before. Looks so big. I wish mom was here to see it...

Kratos, standing behind Atreus, looks at him tenderly. He reaches out, as if to put his hand reassuringly on the boy's shoulder... but his hand stops in mid-air.

It hangs there... as he tries to muster the courage to complete the act of compassion... and once again, he fails. He draws his hand back into a fist, and walks off.

KRATOS
Come, boy.

Atreus gives the overlook once last glance, and keeps moving.

ATREUS
I'm happy we met Brok... but... I'm happier we're leaving this place...

KRATOS
It is behind us now.

Kratos and Atreus follow the cave until it opens into a huge field. At its center are the arching bones of some unknown creature. Here, Kratos spies a new set of tracks to follow, hoping to bring the boy out of his funk.

KRATOS
Boy...

Atreus runs over and kneels down next to him.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
(quizzing him)
These tracks...

ATREUS
Mm... a boar maybe? Not sure. But I'll find it.

KRATOS
Go. It is important for a warrior to keep his skills sharp.

Atreus leads the way forward, in search of the new quarry.

They discover a CHEST with some sort of MAGICAL BARRIER blanketing it. There are THREE RUNES and a RUNIC INSCRIPTION visible through the barrier.

Kratos points at the inscription—

KRATOS
Here. What does it say?

Atreus points to the three runes—

ATREUS (CONT'D)
The runes symbolize the three Nornir.

KRATOS
Nornir?

ATREUS
The fates.

KRATOS
(a bad memory stirred up)
The fates. No good comes from them.

ATREUS
Okay...

As they approach a clearing, we hear the GRUNTS of a WILD BOAR—

KRATOS
(hushed)
Boy... I hear your animal ahead.

ATREUS
(hushed, recognizing grunts)
I knew it was a boar!

The pair trudge down a narrow path that ends at a ridge overlooking a dry creek bed. They crouch down to observe the MAGICAL CREATURE below—a LARGE WILD BOAR feeding on a cluster of BIRD'S NEST SPRUCE. A streak of GOLDEN hair runs along the Boar's side, in a branching design more reminiscent of Runic tattoos than any pattern seen in nature.

Kratos gestures for the boy to pull out his bow. Atreus obeys.

KRATOS
(whispers)
Shoot when you are ready. Remember... draw to your chest. A wild boar's hide is thick.

Atreus pulls the bowstring back, and lets it fly...

...and it hits the boar square in its side. The arrow, however, BOUNCES off on impact, shattering the tip. The boar runs off.

ATREUS
But... I hit it. Didn't I? I did what you said and it looked like it bounced off. Could the boar be magical?

Kratos kneels down, using the opportunity to engage the boy and try to draw him out of the funk he's been in since the bandit attack.

KRATOS
Hunh. What do you think?

ATREUS
It looked weirder than any other boar I've ever seen...

KRATOS
Get after it then.

Atreus scrambles down from the ledge and chases after the boar, ignoring his broken arrow.

Atreus discovers more WILD BOAR TRACKS, leading under a FALLEN COLUMN—

ATREUS
Look! It squeezed under that pillar!

Kratos lifts the column so they can follow the tracks. Atreus kneels behind a log, again observing the magical boar as it grazes in blissful ignorance. Kratos taps Atreus on the back, preparing to again prompt his aiming process. This time, Atreus shrugs him off.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
(whispers, confident)
I got it.

Kratos nods and gives him a little space, but stays close by. All WOODLAND SOUNDS seem to drop away as Atreus zones in on his target, until all we hear is the grunting boar and the boy's calm words—

ATREUS (CONT'D)
(quietly, to himself)
Elbow up. Steady hand. Relax... accuracy over speed...

The arrow fires, hitting the boar directly in the belly. It SQUEALS in pain and beelines out of the creek, disappearing through some BUSHES.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
YES!

KRATOS
Do not lose it!

Without a word, the boy vaults over the log and bolts down into the creek. He fails to notice the dead brush that snags on his clothing, popping his HUNTING KNIFE out of its sheath.

Kratos, following, notices the knife on the ground. He kneels to retrieve it, sheathes it with a disappointed grunt, and looks up to find the boy has disappeared from view.

Kratos continues down the path, and finds the environs growing abruptly opaque with FOG AND MIST.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Boy! Where are you?

Echoing between the trees and stones, from deeper inside the grove—

ATREUS (O.S)
Hurry, father!

Kratos heads in the direction of Atreus' voice, but the grove is maze-like, and soon he's hit a dead-end.

From an entirely different direction than before—

ATREUS (O.S, CONT'D)
I found him! Please hurry!

Kratos keeps searching for the boy, more frantically—

KRATOS
Wait for me, boy!

A threatening FEMALE VOICE is then heard—

UNKNOWN FEMALE (O.S)
(threatening)
WHAT DID YOU DO?!?

ATREUS (O.S)
(panicked)
I'm sorry!

KRATOS
ATREUS!!

5. THE WITCH OF THE WOODS

EXT. RIVER PASS/NEAR MYSTIC GROVE (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Atreus has grown silent. Panic starts to set in as Kratos searches the forest for him.

Kratos pushes through the edge of the foggy grove and emerges into a strikingly colorful clearing. He sees Atreus ahead, kneeling over the WOUNDED BOAR. Kneeling across from him, her back to Kratos, is the UNKNOWN FEMALE figure, a sheathed SWORD across her back.

Kratos listens as he approaches cautiously...

ATREUS
(to unknown female)
We didn't know he belonged to anyone.

UNKNOWN FEMALE
He doesn't. He's my friend.

KRATOS
The boy was following my command.

She looks over her shoulder at Kratos, and we see the face of a WOMAN: A powerful pagan WITCH OF THE WOODS. One of her BLOOD-STAINED HANDS grabs Kratos—

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Then help fix this.

—pulling him down. She puts his hand over the BOAR'S wound.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
Hold here please.

She circles round the boar, sleeves rolled up, hands covered in blood, and we get a better look at her: She has a warrior's face, with piercing brown eyes and a wild mane of partially braided brown hair. She looks to be in her mid-40s, with a gravitas that suggests experience well beyond those years. A brilliant CRYSTAL hangs from a strand around her neck. She is focused and utterly unintimidated by Kratos, speaking with the succinct urgency of a trauma surgeon.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
HOLD, I said. He's losing blood.

The boar gives a PAINED GRUNT and struggles, breathing labored. The great head of the beast lies on the boy's lap—Atreus watches helplessly. His ARROW has been pulled and lays at the creature's side. The witch shakes her head, looking at the blood everywhere. She pulls HEALING HERBS from POUCHES on her BELT, preparing a MEDICINAL PASTE as she talks.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
The last of his kind in all the realm and you shoot him. You needed food?

ATREUS
Target practice...

WITCH OF THE WOODS
(giving Kratos an ugly look)
Target practice...

ATREUS
I'm so, so sorry...

WITCH OF THE WOODS
(to Kratos)
Keep that pressure on.
(back to Atreus)
The blame is mine. I should have kept a closer eye.

ATREUS
Will he die?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
(perhaps too intensely)
I will not let him.

She finishes up the PASTE and smears it across her hands.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
(to Kratos)
You—the arrow cut a tideway inside him. Find both ends and hold them tightly.

Kratos pushes in for a closer look, reaching into the BLOODY MEATUS with both hands.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
Start with the left side. Grab it and hold.

He finds the RUPTURED ARTERY amidst SPRAYING BLOOD.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
Now the right side. Hold it tight.

Kratos digs around inside the SQUEALING BOAR and finds the other end of the artery.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
Good. Now pull them together—line them up.

They're slippery, but he manages to line up both ends. Squinting, he joins the severed artery. The witch lays both her PASTE-FILLED HANDS on top of the boar's joined artery and Kratos' fingers.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
(closing her eyes, incantation voice)
Sunnan-þoka.

A CORONA OF LIGHT—like the aurora borealis—momentarily escapes from between her closed palms. The boar bucks with a SQUEAL. The witch pulls back her hands, as does Kratos, and they see the paste has glued the smoking wound together.

ATREUS
(amazed)
You're a witch...

WITCH OF THE WOODS
I can't finish the healing here. My home is just beyond the trees there.
(equal part question and command)
You'll carry him?

Atreus looks at his father with pleading eyes. The Witch locks eyes with Kratos, fierce and intense.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
He must not die.

Kratos looks into her eyes, and believes her. He nods and picks up the wounded animal.

The Witch of the Woods walks over to a rocky wall, covered in VINES.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
Good. He seems stable and calm for now.

Reaching down to pick up some LOOSE SOIL from the ground, she rubs the dirt between the palms of her hands and makes a SWEEPING MOTION toward the wall—

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
Greiða!
(translation)

Disentangle!

Using her *seiðr* magic, the witch causes the vines to recede, revealing an opening in the rocks.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
This way.

There is no apparent exit to the clearing. The Witch of the Woods approaches a LARGE MYSTICAL TREE, raises a hand, and nods. A GUST OF WIND sweeps through the clearing, playing the WIND CHIMES in the mystical tree's branches. The tree untwists roots and branches, revealing a PATH.

EXT/INT. MYSTIC GROVE/WITCH'S HOUSE (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Both Kratos and Atreus take notice of the magic at work as they follow the Witch along the path—Atreus with awe and Kratos with trepidation. Kratos carries the boar as Atreus jogs ahead.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
That bow's a little big for you, isn't it?

ATREUS
My mother made it for me. Said I'd grow into it.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
I've never seen you in these woods. She must miss you being away from home.

ATREUS
She... she's dead.

He points at the mountaintop in the distance, framed through the trees ahead of them.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
We're taking her ashes to the highest peak in the realms.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
(alarmed)
Ashes?

ATREUS
It was her last wish.

KRATOS
(chastising his openness)
Boy!

WITCH OF THE WOODS
I'm... sorry for your loss.
(awkwardly changing the subject)
We're here.

They approach a STRANGE HILL the texture of clam shell, with a GNARLED TREE growing atop it.

ATREUS
You live in a tree?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Not in it—below it.
(incantation voice)
Heimili!

With a wave of a hand, she commands the hill to raise up. As it rises, and we see now that it is the BACK SHELL of an MYTHOLOGICAL GIANT TURTLE. Hanging from the belly of the animal is a HOUSE made of tightly entwined branches and roots, as if grown from the forest.

ATREUS
(amazed)
Look!

Kratos, alarmed, takes a quick step back and enters a defensive posture.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
(to Kratos, reassuring)
It's alright.

Kratos relaxes his stance a bit, but eyes the creature and the Witch warily. Atreus fearlessly runs towards the gargantuan creature.

ATREUS
(thrilled)
Is he friendly?!

KRATOS
(warning)
Boy...

WITCH OF THE WOODS
I promise you, he's safe.

The creature lowers its head to the boy, who responds by reaching up to scratch its CHIN.

ATREUS
He won't hurt anyone...

They approach a VINE-COVERED DOOR. With another wave of her hand, the vines pull the door open. The Boar WRITHES in Kratos' arms.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Quickly.

...and they follow her inside the house.

SUNLIGHT STREAMS in from unshuttered windows. The house is littered with the ACCOUTREMENTS of ancient shamanic *seiðr* magic; the corners are bursting with WOODEN VIALS, SPRIGS of arctic willow and lyme grass, the BONES of mythological animals, a DISTAFF with FLAX hanging from it. It's an unusual contrast—secret tools of the night laid bare by the sunny light of day.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
(to Kratos)
Place him on the stave there.

She gestures to a SYMBOL written on the floor in paint. CANDLES stand at the cardinal points of the stave, suggesting a sacred spot.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
Keep him still.

Kratos gently rests the animal on the floor. It GRUNTS in pain, struggling. Kratos holds him in place. The witch gathers INGREDIENTS around the room, placing them in a MORTAR.

ATREUS
You live alone?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
It's better this way.

ATREUS
Yeah, my father doesn't like people either.

KRATOS
Boy.

ATREUS
Well, you don't.

The boar suddenly BUCKS and KICKS wildly.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Hold him still—before he hurts himself.

She kneels down next to the boar and holds an OPEN VIAL under its nose. The animal calms down under Kratos' grip.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
(softly to the boar)
Easy... rest now....
(to Atreus)
I need two more things. Fresh red root grows just behind the house. Can you pull a cluster?

Atreus nods and scampers out the open door.

KRATOS
What else?

As Kratos begins to stand, the witch grabs his forearm, pulling him closer as if to tell him a secret.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
I...

She stops, not sure if she should speak her mind. She glances out the door, making sure the boy is out of earshot, before throwing caution to the wind...

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
I know you're a god. Not of this realm, but there's no mistaking it.

Kratos tries to hide his surprise, but can't muster a response.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
He doesn't know, does he? About your true nature—or his own?

Kratos pulls free of the witch's grip as he speaks, a little defensively—

KRATOS
That is none of your concern.

The witch crosses the room to her apothecary. Atreus can be seen outside the window, in her garden.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
The gods of these realms don't take kindly to outsiders. Trust me, I know. When they find you—and they will—they'll make things difficult. The boy will want answers.

KRATOS
That will be my problem.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Whatever you're hiding, you cannot protect him forever. But you're right...
(shrugs)
...doesn't concern me.

She picks up the earlier conversation as if this uncomfortable exchange never happened as she motions toward the back door—

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
(to herself)
I also need Lamb's Cress. Do you mind? It's a white-petaled flower in the garden. Just a handful.

KRATOS
(anything to get out of the room)
Fine. Lamb's Cress...

As Kratos and Atreus look for ingredients in the Witch's garden, the boy announces—

ATREUS
(calling out)
I like her. I mean, *she lives under a turtle!*

KRATOS
You are too open with her. We do not know if she can be trusted.

ATREUS
(looking on the bright side)
She hasn't tried to kill us.

KRATOS
Yet.

Atreus pulls at the roots, but they run deeper than he thinks. He pulls with all his might without success.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
(straining)
Can you help? I can't quite... get it...

Kratos pulls the boy's misplaced HUNTING KNIFE from his belt and holds it up.

KRATOS
Would this help?

ATREUS
(checking his sheath)
I dropped it...?

KRATOS
When you were chasing the animal.

Atreus takes the knife, ashamed.

ATREUS
(mad at himself)
What's wrong with me? If I'd lost this...

KRATOS
You *did* lose it.

Atreus easily cuts away some red root with the knife.

ATREUS
(sheepish)
I'll take better care of it from now on.

KRATOS and Atreus return with the ingredients, handing them to the WITCH OF THE WOODS.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Ah, exactly what I need.

She adds it to her mortar and grinds. She then applies the SALVE to the boar and it starts to BREATHE more easily, drifting into a pain-free sleep.

ATREUS
So he's going to live?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Yes.

KRATOS
Then we are leaving.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Wait... Not without thanks.

The Witch dips her finger in a JAR and reaches out to Kratos' neck. He grabs her hand reflexively.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
You want solitude? This mark will hide you from... those who might make your journey difficult.

Kratos nods, with an approving grunt, allowing her to paint a SEIÐR RUNE OF PROTECTION on his neck. He watches her keenly, not sure what to make of the mysterious witch.

She bends down to the boy's level, and notices the BLOOD from his first kill still smudged against his cheek. She licks her thumb, and wipes it away. Atreus is torn between a teenager's embarrassment and a yearning for this maternal touch. She paints the same rune on his neck.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
(incantation voice)
Heimili!

Through open windows, we see the house SINK into the ground around us—as if the mythological creature connected to the house is squatting down. The view outdoors is replaced by soil and earth. The house finally settles into place with a GENTLE THUD.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
There's a shortcut below the house that leads safely out of these woods.

The Witch opens the front door. Instead of leading outside, it now leads to a spiral staircase below.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
Follow this path down, then head towards daylight.
She stands under the doorway as Kratos and Atreus file past her.

ATREUS
Will we see you again?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
(smiling)
As much or as little as you like. Now get out of here.

KRATOS
Come, boy.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
This underground passage should put you back on your path to the mountain. Just use the boat.

Lingering further—

ATREUS
(re: healing boar)
How is he?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
He needs rest... but I think he's out of danger.

ATREUS
Does he have a name?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Hildisvíni. He's been a good friend for a long time.

ATREUS
I've never seen a boar like him. You said he was the last in the realm?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
The last in *this* realm. He's from somewhere else entirely. Back home he could take any form he liked... but since he came here, he's been... stuck.

ATREUS
Stuck as a boar?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Stuck in his mind. His own true nature grows faint in his memory, like a dream... while the illusion feels more real every passing day.

ATREUS
Not sure I understand.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
To live... simply to live, in your physical form, day after day... it's hard to resist believing you are your form. In youth, he might have had the strength to rebel... but Hildisvíni is very, very old. Without me to remind him of home—of *himself*—I fear the Boar is all that will remain.

ATREUS
Well, I hope he finds his way home.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Thank you, child. I do too.

6. BENEATH THE LAKE

EXT/INT. MYSTIC GROVE/WITCH'S CAVERN (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

In the caves beneath the Witch's house, they find a docked BOAT, and push off. Kratos steers from the back as Atreus sits center-seat.

ATREUS
Now we'll get to that mountain quick.
(beat)
I just can't believe I'm here, doing all this. There was a time I thought I'd never leave our woods. Or even my own bed sometimes.

KRATOS
You were not to blame for your sickness.

ATREUS
Oh, I know. I guess I'm just saying... this is great.

They emerge into a narrow RIVER CANYON.

ATREUS
There's the mountain! Look how close we are.

KRATOS
We flow into sea water.

ATREUS
How do you know?

KRATOS
(taking a deep breath)
Do you not smell it?

ATREUS
If that smell is the sea... the sea stinks.

EXT. LAKE OF NINE (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

While in the boat, They pass through a NATURAL OVERHANG and emerge into a VAST LAKE.

They drift past a half-submerged MONUMENTAL STONE STATUE of a GOD holding a HAMMER.

ATREUS
Look at that. It's Thor...

KRATOS
Thor... God of Thunder...

ATREUS
That's right! I never thought you listened when mother spoke of the gods.

KRATOS
I seldom did. Did she speak of one who could feel no pain?

ATREUS
Oh—that sounds like Baldur.

KRATOS
Baldur...

ATREUS
An Aesir god. Son of Odin and Frigg.

KRATOS
And Odin is king...

ATREUS
That's right. Why do you ask?

Kratos does not answer.

Rowing the boat across the lake, they approach a LARGE STATUE seemingly floating on the surface of the water. It appears to be an ANCIENT KING wielding a SPEAR & SHIELD.

ATREUS
I think I see something... just sitting there in the middle of the lake.

As the boat approaches the statue, Atreus points out a RUNE INSCRIPTION carved into the shield.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
I see runes there, on his chest. Can't quite make it out.

Atreus leans out to read it.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
(reading)
It reads: "Sacrifice your arms to the center of the water; awaken again the cradle of the world."
(puzzled)
What... throw our weapons into the water?
(amused)
Guess that won't be a problem for *you*. Are you gonna do it?

KRATOS
(mulling it over)
Mmm...

Atreus watches as KRATOS hurls THE LEVIATHAN AXE into the LAKE. It disappears under FOG-ENSHROUDED WATER. After a moment, he raises his hand to summon it back. NOTHING HAPPENS.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
(confused/alarmed)
The axe did not return...

Suddenly there is a RUMBLING. The lake itself seems to SHAKE. A piece of something LARGE AND SCALY is moving across the mountaintops in the distance, and somehow that same large and scaly presence is everywhere around and beneath them too.

The WATER LEVEL of the entire lake begins to drop, exposing submerged BARNACLE-COVERED STRUCTURES under the water. The DRAINING WATER causes the boat to CIRCLE around itself.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Hang on, boy!

ATREUS
Okay!

The boat bobs to a stop, bumping into a strange-looking, SCALY WALL.

KRATOS
(cautious)
What is this?

A MONUMENTAL SHAPE emerges from the water, breaking through the surface fog in an operatic display of SPRAY and SPUME until Kratos and Atreus are starting into a MASSIVE EYE.

ATREUS
(in awe)
It's the World Serpent...

WATER washes off the surface, revealing a GIGANTIC SERPENT as it lifts itself from the water, standing upright like a cobra.

As the massive snake rises, the water level in the lake continues to drop considerably. The lowered water exposes a SUBMERGED TEMPLE capped with a GIANT DOME. Water drips down the glistening, BARNACLE-ENCRUSTED ARCHITECTURE.

WHITE GULLS still circle the lake, flapping past the giant snake, giving it proper scale (which is EPIC).

The giant snake leans in and something drops from his mouth into the boat. They look down and see the wet LEVIATHAN AXE.

Atreus stands his ground, seemingly without fear.

KRATOS
Stay calm, boy!

ATREUS
I am! This is great...!

The snake eyeballs Kratos and Atreus carefully, water dripping from his enormous snout.

Then... From the deepest recesses of his throat, there emerges a LOW RUMBLE—a DEEP HARMONIC VOICE that sounds like a combination of Mongolian throat singing and the "clicking" languages of African bushman—two simultaneous layers of lower pitches and higher harmonics, amplified by the resonant cavities and vocal chords of the reptilian mouth and head. The AIR rushing between his teeth

sounds like WIND swirling between rocks, and words end in a CAT'S PURR. It feels like the most ANCIENT TONGUE ever heard.

WORLD SERPENT
Keh-naw-nooooo. Gooooo-thooooo seh-nooooo.
(translation, do not subtitle)
That axe... I recognize it from somewhere. What god are you? Why do you trouble me?

Kratos shakes his head, not understanding.

KRATOS
It speaks?!

ATREUS
Yeah! Mom said he's friendly!

KRATOS
What is it saying?

ATREUS
I don't know!

WORLD SERPENT
Gooooo-thooooo-leeeeet, air-fooooo-thooooo.
(translation, do not subtitle)
Do not trouble me again, little god, until you have a tongue with which to speak to me.

The serpent wearily retreats, but instead of going back beneath the water, he lays himself out across the mountains, his giant face overlooking the lake.

ATREUS
(exhilarated)
That... that was amazing...

As the water settles, Atreus looks off across the lake.

ATREUS
(excited)
Wait... there's a shipwreck way over there. See that?

Looking to his left, he points at the STATUE OF THOR they rowed past earlier.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
And there's the statue of Thor.
(confused)
Except... I can see a lot more of him now.

KRATOS
The water dropped—when the serpent rose.

ATREUS
Ooooh... that must be why that beach wasn't there before. See?

The boy points to a NEWLY-EXPOSED BEACH in the distance. Then his attention shifts to THE MOUNTAIN looming behind it in the distance.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
And there's the mountain! Lookit—that building leads from the foot of the mountain to that golden temple.

Near them, there is now an impossibly long GOLDEN TEMPLE, covered in barnacles and dripping wet. The ANCIENT KING STATUE, at water level earlier, now stands on top of an ornate, LARGE DOME.

KRATOS
It was all just under the surface.

ATREUS
Except for the statue. Good thing, huh?

EXT/INT. LAKE OF NINE/TÝR'S TEMPLE (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

As Kratos rows towards a DOCK by the building—

KRATOS
You know of that serpent?

ATREUS
He's one of the Giants—and he's so big he's wrapped around the whole world and bites his own tail.

KRATOS
An exaggeration.

ATREUS
I dunno... looked pretty big to *me.*

Kratos and Atreus ascend the long staircase to the upper level of the MASSIVE BRIDGE. When they reach the top, their attention is immediately drawn to the MOUNTAIN looming in the distance, down the length of the bridge.

ATREUS
(excited)
Is this the way to the mountain?

KRATOS
It would seem.

The SCRAPING SOUND of large doors sliding open is heard behind them. Kratos and Atreus spin around to see BROK in the final stage of pushing open a set of LARGE TEMPLE DOORS.

BROK
If it isn't the bearded beefer and his sac-seed! Have I got something for you two...

ATREUS
Brok? But how did you—

BROK
None of yer fuckin' business. Now get in here, I got something for you! And don't go makin' pig eyes at any of my stuff... I found this place first!

Brok walks away from the open door and disappears into the temple.

ATREUS
(puzzled)
Okay...

They follow him inside the temple.

ATREUS
What do you think he wants?

KRATOS
To test our patience.

BROK
When word gets out about my new shop, folks'll finally come outta hiding. They'll be clawing all over each other just to catch a *whiff* of my wares—you watch!

When the player Interacts with Brok—

BROK (CONT'D)
Catch!

He tosses Kratos a MYSTICAL MEDALLION and indicates a PILE OF GLOWING ROCKS in the corner.

BROK (CONT'D)
The pile of rocks there—with that Key of Yggdrasil, you can open a magic door to the branches of the World Tree—a shortcut 'tween the realms. If y'ever see 'em out in the world, use it to get back to me quick.

We PAN BACK to Brok at his shop.

BROK (CONT'D)
But it's only one-way—straight back here and nowhere else. And whatever you do, never, never, EVER, never, *ever*, throw yourself over the edge of the path... lest you want *death.*

ATREUS
(deadpan)
Yeah, I don't see us wanting that.

Lingering further—

BROK
Say, you didn't happen to run yerself afoul of a scruffy fella, bout yea high, doesn't feel pain, sounds drunk but's probably just slow?

Kratos GROWLS at the unwelcome suggestion that the Stranger is alive.

BROK (CONT'D)
Hey, how d'ya think I feel about it? If I'd wanted Aesir business, I'd have set up shop outside a brothel. Or a fighting pit. Or a fighting brothel.

ATREUS
Uh...did he say Aesir? Like, gods?

KRATOS
No.

Kratos and Atreus leave Brok's shop and make their way down the massive bridge outside. In the middle, under an OPEN ARCHWAY, the pair encounter a strange PEDESTAL. When Kratos interacts with it, the floor ascends, lifting them to the archway above. On the archway, they discover an ENORMOUS HORN in the shape of a serpent.

ATREUS
(impressed/intrigued)
What is *this?*

Kratos finds the MOUTH PIECE.

KRATOS
A horn. Here is the end.

ATREUS
Can we blow into it?

KRATOS
Without knowing the outcome?

ATREUS
We usually push every button and pull every lever we see!

KRATOS
Outcomes we can predict. No, this is something else. We must develop your instincts.

Kratos finds a DOCKED BOAT. They climb aboard and push off. As they boat—

ATREUS
I wish we could have gone on a trip like this with Mother. She could fight, couldn't she?

KRATOS
Yes. She fought.... beautifully.

After some time in the Boat—

ATREUS
SO! Know any good stories to pass the time?

KRATOS
What kind of story?

ATREUS
I don't know... Mother always had stories. Weren't you told any when you were a boy?

KRATOS
There was a man I knew of long ago. His stories were brief, and purposeful.

ATREUS
Sounds... fun? Do you remember any?

KRATOS
Hm... there was one that concerned a hare and a tortoise.

SON
So what happens?

KRATOS
They wager on a race between them. The hare is too confident of victory, and foolish, while the tortoise is steady, and disciplined. The tortoise wins.

SON
You... haven't told a lot of stories, have you.

Later—

SON
Want to try another story? Can't be any worse than the last one.

KRATOS
Hm. There was... a horse. The horse sought vengeance upon his enemy, a stag. But he could not kill the stag

alone. The horse met a man, a hunter, and made a deal. He took the man's bit and bridle, and allowed him to ride in a saddle on his back. Together, they killed the stag, and the horse tasted victory. But the hunter would not release the horse, and made a slave of him.

ATREUS
So getting revenge cost him his freedom. Hope it was worth it.

KRATOS
It was not.

7. THE BLACK BREATH

EXT/INT. TÝR'S BRIDGE/VANAHEIM TOWER (MIDGARD) - DAY

Across the temple bridge from Brok's Shop, they approach a GOLDEN TOWER—

KRATOS
With luck, that tower leads through to the mountain.

ATREUS
I'm ready.

They walk into the TOWER, expecting grandeur, but instead find a creepy, dark, dungeon. After clearing out foes inside the entrance, they see a strange GREEN FOG filling the corridor ahead.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
What is *that*? Smells awful...

KRATOS
Poison...

Kratos throws the AXE to freeze the "scorn pole" beyond the fog, and the poison dissipates long enough for them to pass. They come to a small chasm and must jump down into the pit to proceed.

Kratos and son climb a wooden structure out of the pit.

ATREUS
(disgusted)
What *were* those things? They smelled awful.

KRATOS
Your mother called them "scorn poles". Poison magic.
She was the one who showed me how to disable them.

Atreus CHUCKLES.

KRATOS
What?

ATREUS
It's just funny to think of her teaching you something.

KRATOS
(fondly)
Yes.

EXT. FOOTHILLS/GONDOLA CAMP (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Kratos and Atreus opens a LARGE DOOR and enter the FOOTHILLS. Ahead of them—barely visible through a THICK FOG—looms the MOUNTAIN.

ATREUS
Whoa... sure is foggy here.

Nearby, they see a SMALL MAN working on MACHINERY next to a CAMPFIRE. He's around the same size as Brok—except not blue, nor slovenly. His parts and tools are laid out meticulously. His name is SINDRI.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Another dwarf, should we—?

KRATOS
No. He is of no consequence.

Sindri stands as Kratos and Atreus approach.

SINDRI
Excuse me, but... how did you come by that axe?

KRATOS
That is my concern alone.

Sindri steps in their path, blocking the way. He looks timid and uncomfortable doing it.

SINDRI
And while I won't dispute that... I know that blade. It was one of *ours.* But we didn't make it for *you.*

KRATOS
Step aside.

Kratos takes one step forward, but the small man stands his ground (though he cringes a little). He looks up at the towering Kratos.

SINDRI
I can't. See, the woman we made it for... I was, well... I am... quite fond of her. And I would be somewhat ...displeased if it turns out that ...you did something to her.

Sindri bravely puts up his fists, but his body language says he expects to be demolished.

ATREUS
It was my mother's. She left it to father before she died.

Sindri's arms drop, the fight taken out of him completely.

SINDRI
(somber, to himself)
Faye's dead?

Sindri turns away, and shakes his head mournfully.

SINDRI (CONT'D)
I'm... very, very sorry to hear that. She was a fierce warrior... and a good woman.

His shoulders slump... but it's only a moment before he takes a breath, holds his chin high, and announces with great resolution—

SINDRI (CONT'D)
Okay... I will make improvements to the axe.

They look at him, confused.

ATREUS
But... nobody asked you to...

SINDRI
True. But knowing your mother, she would have insisted I repair that act of vandalism perpetrated against her axe by my brother.

ATREUS
I knew it! You *are* Brok's brother!

Atreus points to a BRANDING IRON amid Sindri's various ARMORER'S ACCOUTREMENTS.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
(to Kratos)
The other half of the brand's here...

KRATOS
The blue one is your brother?

SINDRI
Yes, though my talents are vastly superior. No boast—swear to Freya.

Kratos eyes him cautiously, then holds out the axe.

KRATOS
Do not undo his work. Improve upon it only.

SINDRI
(embarrassed)
Yeeeah... but can you put it down over there? That handle is filthy...

He makes a face and shakes his head in disgust.

KRATOS
No.

SINDRI
Okay, then I'll just... I will just...

Sindri takes the axe to the campfire workshop holding it like a dead rat.

SINDRI (CONT'D)
Ugh... is that dried blood?

As they walk over to Sindri's CAMP—

ATREUS
So what were you working on?

SINDRI
(proudly)
Oh, that... I call it the "Sky Mover." Just up that mountain waits a trove of rare resources. Once I mine it, I'll need a way to bring it all down...

Sindri scoots around the side of his WORKBENCH and lays the axe down on it. He begins cleaning the AXE HANDLE.

ATREUS
And you know how to fix it?

SINDRI
Not even a little.

He finishes wiping down the axe and hands it back to Kratos.

Lingering further—

ATREUS
Did you really make that axe for my mother?

SINDRI
Oh, I'd recognize it anywhere. Ask me, was one of our best... infused with the echoing screams of twenty Frost Trolls. Give or take.

ATREUS
But why her? How did you know her?

SINDRI
She sought *us* out, in the beginning. She was... a special woman. She wanted to protect people. I suppose we thought it was a chance to give power to someone who'd use it for good. She even spoke our native tongue. She'd say, *"Maðurinn sem gengur eigin vegum hans ..."*
(translation, do not subtitle)

The man that walks his own road...

ATREUS
(finishing the phrase)
...*gengur einn.*
(translation, do not subtitle)
...walks alone.

SINDRI
That's right! That's impressive. I see a lot of her in your eyes, you know.

ATREUS
Thanks, Sind—

SINDRI
(out of nowhere)
Don't touch me!

ATREUS
What? I didn't! I won't. I'll come back later...

Lingering further—

SINDRI
Be careful where you're going. There's nobody *nice* out here anymore since all the *people* left. I mean, I hate to generalize, but mostly they just try to kill you.

ATREUS
Good tip.

Lingering further—

SINDRI
Um... I know it's not my business, but if I were you I'd wash off that symbol painted on your neck.

KRATOS
We were told it would help protect us. Was that a lie?

SINDRI
Oh no, it's a protection stave alright. But you can't render that pigment into paintable texture without

SINDRI (CONT'D)
blending it with boar urine. And is that *really* better than death?

ATREUS
Maybe a little...?

SINDRI
Well... it's your neck.

EXT/INT. FOOTHILLS/OLD TEMPLE (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

As they trek further up the foothills—

ATREUS
You think all dwarves as weird as Brok and Sindri?

KRATOS
No.

ATREUS
Wonder why they don't get along anymore. I mean, they're family...

KRATOS
That is their matter alone, boy.

ATREUS
Okay.

As they're climbing a tall wall-crack—

ATREUS
Do you think for this last leg up the mountain that maybe I can carry her?

KRATOS
I told you, no.

ATREUS
Why?

Dead-ending at the base of a sheer cliff, Kratos ignores the boy's question as he begins a long climb.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
She meant more to me than you anyway.

KRATOS
What?

Instantly recognizing his mistake, Atreus tries to dig himself out of the hole.

ATREUS
I just meant... I spent more time with her. You were off hunting a lot.

KRATOS
(icily)
It would serve you to stop talking.

Awkward silence as they reach the top of the climb. Ahead, they see an OLD TEMPLE with LARGE RED DOORS. In front of these doors lies a PILLAR, barring Kratos and son from opening them.

As Kratos lifts the large pillar out of the way, the double-doors to the crumbling temple BURST open as an enormous Forað (an Old Norse ogre) barrels out.

It SLAMS Kratos into a wall, pinning him in place with its giant forearm.

The Forað leans into Kratos, taking a sharp WHIFF of him.

FORAÐ
þú mein líki nǫkkurr guð. Ganga bak nú.
[translation, do not subtitle]
You smell like a god. Turn back. Now.

Atreus leaps into action towards the ogre's face—

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Let him GO!

—and plunges an arrow into the its neck.

The Forað recoils in PAIN, releasing Kratos, and SWATTING the boy to the ground. It charges at Atreus, ready to attack, but Kratos jumps in its way, forcing his bicep into the ogre's open mouth. It bites down hard as it grabs Atreus and pulls him close. Kratos ROARS in pain.

Atreus reaches for his hunting knife, but it's covered by the ogre's hand. Struggling, the boy searches the gear on Kratos' back and finds a DAGGER.

ATREUS
(desperate, angry)
RAHHHH!!!

Without missing a beat, he quickly DRIVES it into the ogre's eye.

The Forað recoils in pain, grabbing his eye, and dropping the boy. But he recovers all too quickly. Moments later, it's already CHARGING again.

Kratos SLAMS his axe into the ogre's face with a powerful swing, and it falls back in a daze. While Kratos watches to see if he gets up again, Atreus is seeing what's going on behind him—

ATREUS (CONT'D)
(concerned, getting his attention)
Father...

Kratos (and the camera) turn around, revealing a pack of SEIÐR REAVERS taking up positions around their perimeter—weapons held out, ready to take on whoever wins the fight.

Behind them, the ogre recovers and lets out a fearsome ROAR.

KRATOS
(to Atreus)
Ready yourself.

Immediately after the fight they walk on. Beyond the HUGE RED DOORS, Atreus finally gets a full view of the MASSIVE FACE carved into the rock.

ATREUS
Whoa... I can see why mom wanted us to bring her here.

KRATOS
Indeed.

EXT. FOOTHILLS/STONE STAIRS (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Kratos and Atreus ascend a long pass of STONE STAIRS approaching a CAVE OPENING at the base of the mountain. The surrounding STONE is carved into the shape of a gigantic, howling face—the cave opening serving as the open, screaming mouth. Billowing out of the "mouth" is a mystical BLACK FOG.

ATREUS
Is that... smoke?

KRATOS
Stay back, boy.

Atreus buries his nose in his arm, suggesting an overpowering stench.

ATREUS
Ugh.... what IS that?

KRATOS
We must find another way up.

ATREUS
The witch. Wish she was here. I bet she could get us past this.

A woman's VOICE comes from behind.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
My magic is useless against the Black Breath, and there's no way around it. Odin saw to that long ago.

Atreus lights up at the sight of the Witch of the Woods.

ATREUS
What are you doing here?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Making sure you can finish your journey.

KRATOS
Why wait to warn us?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
(pointed)
I was busy saving my friend, if you remember...

KRATOS
(grunt of acknowledgement)
Mm.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
The Black Breath is a corruption of magic even I can't dispel. Only the pure Light of Alfheim is strong enough

to break through it. But that road is long. What does this goal mean to you?

ATREUS
It's everything.

Kratos looks down at Atreus, whose gaze hasn't left the Witch of the Woods. The earnestness of the boy's response strikes home.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Follow me.

The Witch turns to lead them back down the steps away from the Black Breath.

KRATOS
Why help us?

She's taken aback. Not by the question, but the lack of an easy answer. Taking a deep breath, she gives it her best shot...

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Maybe I see more of myself in you than I'm willing to admit. Maybe... maybe by helping you, I'll make up for a lifetime of mistakes.
(shrugs, looks at Atreus)
Or maybe I just like you.

ATREUS
Even though we shot your friend?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Even though you shot my friend, yes.

It's an honest confession—her pain and vulnerability laid bare. Kratos sizes up the woman standing before him, and sensing no malice, makes his decision.

KRATOS
Where must we go?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
To a realm beyond your own...

KRATOS
("dammit")
Rrrrn.

ATREUS
(excited)
We're going to another realm?!
(to Witch of the Woods)
Are you coming with us?

KRATOS
(answering for her)
Only for a little while.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
(to Atreus)
Only for a little while.

8. A REALM BEYOND

EXT. FOOTHILLS/GONDOLA LIFT (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

The Witch of the Woods leads Kratos and Atreus to the upper terminus of the gondola lift machinery (Sindri's "Sky Mover"). The platform is obstructed by a THICKET of ROOTS and VINES, blocking access.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
We'll use this. *Greiða*!
(translation, do not subtitle)
Disentangle!

The Witch uses her *seiðr* magic, causing the vines to untangle and retreat. As they do, Atreus speaks—

ATREUS
Can't. Sindri said it was broken.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Sindri?

KRATOS
The dwarf at the foot of these hills.

ATREUS
He was fixing it when we got here.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
No one was there when I passed by. Perhaps he finished? Dwarves are awfully resourceful.

KRATOS
And irritating, based on the two we have met.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
(chuckling)
That too.

On the gondola lift, heading down to the bridge from the peak—

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Týr's Temple is at the center of the bay. It is from there we travel to Alfheim. Thankfully, it's no longer under water.

KRATOS
Why is that creature in the bay?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
No one knows. He just *appeared* one day. Soon after, Thor attacked and their battle could be felt across all the realms.
(smiling)
Ultimately, it ended in a stalemate and Thor returned to Odin empty-handed. The Serpent stayed and grew so large he now spans all of Midgard.

ATREUS
(to Kratos)
See! Told you...

WITCH OF THE WOODS
They've hated each other ever since... destined to kill each other come Ragnarök.

ATREUS
You believe in Ragnarök?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
I dearly wish I didn't, child.

EXT. FOOTHILLS/GONDOLA CAMP (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

The gondola lift reaches the bottom of the foothills, and they all step off the platform. The Witch of the Woods leads the way again, followed by Atreus. As they walk--

ATREUS
(bragging bit)
You know... we actually talked to the World Serpent.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
(surprised)
You did?

KRATOS
An exaggeration.

ATREUS
I'm good with languages... even ones I've never heard before. But when he talks, I can't understand any of it!

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Sadly, no one can. He's speaks a dead tongue.

ATREUS
Oh.
(sadly)
Must be lonely.

INT/EXT. TÝR'S BRIDGE/VANAHEIM TOWER (MIDGARD) – DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Returning to the Golden Tower, the Witch walks ahead of them.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Watch your step. Just along here.

ATREUS
You sure? We came through here before and there's no way back across. See?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
(skeptically)
Is that so?

She approaches the edge of the gap, and surveys the area.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
Let me show you something.

The Witch unslings a MAGIC BOW with a GLOWING BOWSTRING. She takes aim at a LARGE CRYSTAL embedded in the rock wall below the gap.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
Are you watching?

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
Ljósta!

She FIRES a GLOWING ARROW into the crystal. The crystal erupts in GOLDEN LIGHT, and a glimmering BRIDGE OF LIGHT forms across the gap.

Atreus watches in amazement as the Witch slings her bow and walks across the bridge of light.

ATREUS
What? It's solid!

He runs across it.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Elven architecture. My bowstring was soaked in the Light of Alfheim. It can now reawaken the magic of the Elves.

ATREUS
Wait... it won't just disappear, will it?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Not as long as the light shines free. This way.

ATREUS
(to Kratos)
I want one.

They walk past SCORN POLES wrapped tightly in ROOTS, keeping their poison contained.

ATREUS
Those roots—what kind of magic is that?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
It's Vanir.

ATREUS
From Vanaheim?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
You know of it?

ATREUS
Just stories. Mother didn't say much about the Vanir gods, just that they're always at war with the Aesir. Guess compared to Odin & Thor, they're the good guys.

KRATOS
There are no "good" gods, boy. Thought I taught you that.

EXT/INT. TÝR'S TEMPLE/MAIN DOME (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

As they walk up the bridge, approaching the Temple—

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Týr's Temple. Built with help from the Giants, Great Týr used it to travel the nine realms and keep the peace between them.

ATREUS
Doesn't seem very peaceful. Everywhere we go, we're attacked. Especially by dead things.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
The risen dead grow ever more numerous. Once, the roads and trails would have been full of people. Now, all
WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
have hid or fled, save for the reavers savage enough to survive in such a world.

As they approach an ENORMOUS WHEEL on a GIANT TRACK at the base of the array—

ATREUS
What are we doing exactly?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Mending the disrepair. Start by lifting that axle.

Kratos lifts the enormous wheel to put it on track, enabling him to push the entire bridge from a pivot point under the array, rotating it around the temple in the center.

ATREUS
Whuh—? The whole entire bridge is turning! How is the whole entire bridge turning?
(to Kratos)
Boy, you're really strong.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Just keep pushing until the bridge reaches its first position.

As Kratos continues to push the bridge—

ATREUS
So about the dead... we heard someone call them "Hel-Walkers". But what are they?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
They are poor, restless souls, denied their judgement and their peace.

ATREUS
By what? Could Vanir magic raise the dead?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
It could, once, but this is no spell. This plague of dead is but a symptom of a world out of balance. Something, or someone, has meddled with powerful forces. That is all I know for sure.

When the bridge is pushed to the end of the track, resetting the mechanism—

ATREUS
That was impressive.
(beat)
You didn't hurt your back, did you?

KRATOS
(annoyed/insulted)
I did not hurt my back.

The Witch leads them to the entrance of the TEMPLE.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
(gesturing to entrance)
Through these doors.

ATREUS
Wait. So did the Giants or the Elves build Týr's temple?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
All the races helped with its construction. It was the last great act of cooperation between the realms before peace disappeared for good.

The Witch walks towards another broken path—

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
Ljósta!

—and fires another GLOWING ARROW into another deactivated light bridge, waiting for Kratos to approach. The glowing bowstring flickers off.

ATREUS
(confused)
Your bowstring stopped glowing.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Its power is now depleted. Only a few nocks of magic remained in the bowstring, and we used them.

She pinches the HEMP BOWSTRING and it magically unstrings itself from her bow.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
Your bow please.

Atreus watches with wonder as his own bowstring unstrings itself with a wave of the Witch's hand. Then she holds up her own bowstring to the boy's bow, and it magically strings itself to his bow.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
Once you claim the Light of Alfheim, infuse the bowstring with its power. Don't forget!

She passes the bow back to Atreus, who examines the new bowstring eagerly.

As they walk across the newly-formed light bridge—

ATREUS
You talk like you're not coming with us.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
I'll try, but measures were taken to keep me trapped in Midgard.

KRATOS
(wary)
Why?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
The gods don't care for me much.

INT. TÝR'S TEMPLE/REALM TRAVEL ROOM (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

They follow the Witch of the Woods into an immense DARK CHAMBER with a domed ceiling that disappears into darkness. At its center, a HOLE drops into inky blackness. In the middle of the hole, there hovers a FLOATING PEDESTAL with an ELABORATE TABLE. Its features are hard to see in the darkness.

ATREUS
(hushed)
Is this it? It's so dark.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
This temple has been asleep, underwater, for almost a hundred and fifty winters. It needs only the light of the Bifröst to reawaken.

As they approach the hole in the center of the floor, TREE ROOTS erupt from the edge of the floor, creating a BRIDGE across the gap.

ATREUS
Those roots don't look like your magic.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
They aren't. These roots are part of the great World Tree, and make travel between the realms possible.

Standing next to an empty TABLE at the center of the room, the Witch pulls out a BIFRÖST—a portable, metallic lamp housing a FAINTLY-GLOWING CRYSTAL.

KRATOS
How does it work?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
You will need this—a Bifröst—to create travel between realms.

The Witch of the Woods hands the Bifröst to Kratos. He examines it with guarded interest.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
It can capture, hold, and transfer the Light of Alfheim.

Kratos nods, and she gestures to the REALM TRAVEL TABLE.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
Place the Bifröst there.

Kratos places the Bifröst into a POWER RECEPTACLE in the table. The table fills with a POOL OF MYSTIC ENERGY. Atreus GASPS at the room waking up. The camera comes to rest on the pool of energy. We can see Atreus on the other side of the travel table, jumping up to try and get a better look.

KRATOS
What now?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Give it a moment. The temple needs time to wake up from its long slumber. It is from this room—and this room alone—that you will be able to cross between realms.

The table shows a DIORAMIC REPRESENTATION of Týr's Temple and the towers around the lake.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
What you see before you represents the temple in which we stand, as well as the realm towers that encircle the Lake of Nine outside.

The camera spins around, and shows EIGHT DIFFERENT DOORS along the perimeter of the Realm Travel Room. Lights appear along the doors as the room wakes up.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
All the realms exist in the same physical space, reflections of each other. These doors, the towers outside, and the nine realms are all intertwined and co-existing on the branches of the World Tree—separated only by the Bifröst light of Alfheim. This place can focus and control that light.

ATREUS
(in awe)
And is this the World Tree?

The camera pans up to an ETHEREAL TREE forming over the table, its branches growing and reaching out towards the domed ceiling above them. STARDUST swirls around the room.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Only an artistic representation of it. No, the Yggdrasill is much, much more than this. The Tree of Life is bound to the fate of the world, just as we are bound to it.

The camera floats along the ghostly branches, twisting and turning to capture the cosmic light show. The stardust whips up into a nexus of energy above the tree, which explodes in renewed energies that pour over the tree, making flowers bloom.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
The tree nourishes our soils. The dew from its leaves feeds our valleys and rivers. The tree's very existence supports all of creation along its boughs—its life energy interwoven into the tapestry of life... birth, growth, death, and rebirth... every strand, transcending time, transcending space. Everything comes back to the tree.

The camera returns from its aerial tour of the tree, and comes back to earth.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
So... that's how it works. But I'm guessing you were looking for a more practical answer.

KRATOS
Yes.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Very well...

We are now back at the table, looking at it over Kratos' shoulder.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
The bridge you pushed outside is currently positioned to lead to the realm of Vanaheim. Instead, turn the wheel to our actual destination—Alfheim.

In the diorama of the Lake, a bridge rotates around the small model of the temple array. The bridge inside the Realm Travel Room itself also turns in conjunction with Kratos' turning of the wheel.

ATREUS
Wait, is this moving the big bridge outside?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Yes. The wheel turns the bridge, and the bridge aligns to the different realm towers on the lake outside.

ATREUS
Wait... there's no tower on this one.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
And that's why realm travel to Jötunheim is impossible. Without a tower for the bridge to lock into, the sequence can't begin.

Once the player aligns the wheel to the Alfheim selection—

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
Every realm has a travel rune that unlocks the bridge to that realm. I'm giving you the one for Alfheim. Now you can lock in your destination.

Once the player confirms their destination of Alfheim—

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
We're ready. Remember to take the Bifröst—you don't want to lose that.

Kratos reaches for the Bifröst and pulls it from the power receptacle.

The BRIDGE inside the realm travel room automatically aligns itself to the ALFHEIM BRIDGE DOOR, and a BIFRÖST BUBBLE opens: A hallucinatory COSMIC LIGHT SHOW the likes of which we've never seen.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
Now the realm travel bridge will align, and the realm between realms will open.

An enormous CRYSTAL emerges from the floor in front of the door to Alfheim, and a BEAM OF LIGHT shoots out from the table into the crystal. They are surrounded by a KALEIDOSCOPE of colors and strange images—bits of reality fallen between the cracks, lost in the realm between realms.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
See that giant crystal? Each realm has a corresponding one that focuses and amplifies the power of the Bifröst, opening the bridge to that realm. That's why realm travel is only possible from this room.

ATREUS
What about that one realm tower missing from the lake?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
The Jötunheim tower disappeared from *all* realms over a hundred winters ago, when the Giants vanished from Midgard. Where the tower went and how they moved it remain a mystery.

The light show ends, but they're still standing in the same room.

ATREUS
It didn't work. We're still here.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Follow me.

The BIFRÖST CRYSTAL in Kratos' hand no longer glows, and is dead black.

KRATOS
The Bifröst is dark.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
This trip was its last use. There's no going back until it's replenished with the Light of Alfheim.

KRATOS
So we are trapped.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Someone of your ability should have little trouble getting back to Midgard.

ATREUS
And we'll be able to make that Black Breath go away?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
With the captured Light of Alfheim, yes.

She steps out of the Realm Travel Room and into Alfheim beyond, followed by Atreus, and then Kratos.

EXT. TÝR'S BRIDGE (ALFHEIM) – DUSK (CONTINUOUS)

They emerge onto a long BRIDGE stretching out far into the distance. The bridge is in the same place as the one in the Midgard realm—but instead of spanning a lake, it spans a bottomless chasm. This section is blanketed by THICK, TWISTING TREES unlike anything Kratos or Atreus has ever seen.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Welcome to Alfheim, gentlemen.

The Witch of the Woods leads the way, running her hand along an overhead TREE BRANCH that sprouts small WHITE FLOWERS at her touch. She and Atreus step past the last tree and a wide open VISTA greets them with a subtle, aurora-like greenish/reddish glow blanketing the sky.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
Think you can spot...

Her smile gives way to concern as she trails off, staring into the distance.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
The light. I can barely see it. Something's wrong.

She points down the bridge to a large STONE TEMPLE in the distance. A column of light can be seen faintly glowing upward from the structure, beaming high up into the sky.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
See that column of light on the horizon? It's housed in the heart of a ringed temple. We'll find what we need there.

—and notices her hand starting to disintegrate.

The sound of a THOUSAND NAILS AGAINST A THOUSAND CHALKBOARDS pierces the air.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
(to herself)
No, no, no, no, no. Dammit, not yet...

The witch's body starts getting DRAGGED BACK towards the temple by an invisible force.

ATREUS
What's happening—?!

Atreus grabs the Witch of the Woods' hand, but it finishes disintegrating, and he falls backwards.

Kratos grabs the witch by the other hand, stopping her from getting dragged back. Her skin cracks, like the canvas of a deteriorating Renaissance painting... but instead of flaking off, the bits are mystically yanked back towards the temple. Her feet leave the floor as the pull gets stronger. By the open temple door, a REALM TEAR has formed, a portal to another place—the distinctive RED LEAVES of the Witch's grove are visible beyond.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
(tense, but not panicked)
To restore the Bifröst's magic, you must step into the Light. But be very careful not to get caught up in the—

Her sentence is cut short by a crescendo of TOTAL MOLECULAR SEPARATION, and SHE'S GONE. Her disintegrated essence is swept up into the REALM TEAR as it SHUTS and DISAPPEARS. The temple doors slam closed, and it's suddenly very quiet.

ATREUS
No!

KRATOS
("well, *shit*...")
Hrrn.

Once the dust settles, Atreus breaks the silence.

ATREUS
She's not dead, is she?

KRATOS
Not likely. Come.

They set off across the bridge, towards the LIGHT.

9. ADVENTURE TO ALFHEIM

EXT. TÝR'S BRIDGE (ALFHEIM) – DUSK (CONTINUOUS)

Crossing the bridge, Kratos and Atreus see a LIGHT ELF standing on the bridge, robed in white, illuminating the area like a lamp post. Suddenly, a BLURRY STREAK shoots down from the sky, colliding with the Light Elf. It plummets down into the darkness.

ATREUS
(whispers)
Whoa... What's that about?

KRATOS
Not our concern, boy. *Focus.*

On the side of the bridge, carved into a rocky outcropping, a message is scrawled in runes—

ATREUS
Hm...something about an "eternal war for the light". I don't get it—if both sides need it, why not just share it?

KRATOS
Greed. You will find it a common cause for war.

As they walk down the bridge, a LIGHT ELF can be seen standing near the Realm Tower. In one quick motion, a DARK ELF streaks down from the sky and stabs the Light Elf—immediately flying upwards and flinging him to the ground with a dull, wet THUD.

ATREUS
(horrified)
They keep murdering the Light Elves....

KRATOS
It is war—the end of one. The robed ones lost.

ATREUS
Oh.

Some DARK ELVES fly in, taking notice of Kratos and advancing on his position. They attack, but Kratos and Atreus fend them off. Shortly after—

ATREUS
What are they attacking us for? We didn't do anything.

KRATOS
Hmph. More will come.

As they continue up the long bridge—

ATREUS
Did you say something?

KRATOS
No.

ATREUS
Oh. Okay.

EXT. LAKE OF LIGHT (ALFHEIM) – NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Beyond the bridge, they find a BOAT on a SANDY BEACH and shove it into the water.

KRATOS
Did your mother speak of this realm?

ATREUS
Not much. Just that since the elves were always fighting over the Light, it kept them isolated.

Kratos doesn't press any further. The boat enters into a tunnel under a low, overhanging rock formation.

ATREUS
Huh?

KRATOS
Again, I said nothing.

ATREUS
Weird. Could have sworn you said some—

Atreus suddenly doubles over in his seat, holding his head and groaning in pain.

KRATOS
What is it, boy?

ATREUS
(in pain)
Voices. You don't hear that?

KRATOS
I hear nothing.

Atreus steadies himself.

ATREUS
It's going away now.

The boy sits up as the voices completely disappear.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
There was screaming. Lots of voices... Angry. You really didn't hear that?

KRATOS
(concerned)
No.

ATREUS
It felt... evil.

Kratos resumes rowing the boat. As they boat around a corner, they see TWO LIGHT ELVES standing on a ridge, looking down at them. After a few beats, they walk off and DISAPPEAR behind the ridge.

ATREUS
Look. Should we try talking to them?

KRATOS
No.

ATREUS
But maybe they need help.

KRATOS
They do not stop us, so they do not concern us.

ATREUS
But maybe—

KRATOS
They do not concern us.

The boat turns a corner, and they float out of the river canyon onto a BEAUTIFUL LAKE. In the distance, a RINGED TEMPLE surrounds the COLUMN OF LIGHT shooting straight up into the sky. A few silhouettes of DARK ELVES circle the column.

Atreus is half-turned in his seat, trying to take in the scenery around them.

ATREUS
(under his breath, awe)
Look at that... that must be the ringed temple.

EXT. TEMPLE OF LIGHT (ALFHEIM) – NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Kratos and Atreus dock near the TEMPLE OF LIGHT, they see a MYSTICAL BRIDGE composed of PURE LIGHT leading to the temple's apparent entrance, a BLUE DOOR.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
The blue door—that's gotta be the entrance. Let's go!

KRATOS
Careful, boy.

In the distance, a SWARM OF DARK ELVES flood the underside of the bridge, covering a LIGHT CRYSTAL underneath.

ATREUS
What are they doing?

The bridge DISAPPEARS suddenly.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
The bridge is gone. They covered the crystal with that stuff. Why?

KRATOS
To prevent reinforcements.

Noticing their presence, a few Dark Elves fly over to attack. After defeating them—

ATREUS
What is their problem with us?

KRATOS
We do not belong here.

Below where the LIGHT BRIDGE previously existed, there is a network of chambers.

ATREUS
Maybe we can fix the bridge from down there?

EXT. LAKE OF LIGHT (ALFHEIM) – NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

As they boat around in search of a way into the trench—

ATREUS
It's sad the elves can't work things out. Alfheim's such a beautiful place, but... war makes it ugly.

KRATOS
You see with the eyes of a child. In war, a soldier sees beauty only in the blood of his enemy. The rest of him is lost—sometimes never to return.

ATREUS
You... *know* about war, don't you...

KRATOS
Wars are fought for two things... survival, or advantage. Battles may be won by the better soldier. *Wars* are won by those who are willing to sacrifice everything to ensure victory.

After some further boating—

ATREUS
Sindri said... *mother* was a warrior. Was she in a war too?

KRATOS
Of a sort. Her family was decimated by hostile rivals, and she alone survived. She walked the warrior's path,

but her war was to live on. To brave an unforgiving world alone.

ATREUS
And that's why she asked Sindri and Brok to make her the Axe?

KRATOS
She had the strength to wield such a weapon, and the wisdom to use it for good. She found purpose in protecting the weak.

ATREUS
So... she'd help out the Elves?

KRATOS
No.

After some further boating—

They discover a small island with a SAND BOWL. *These are used across the game as "locks" to which the "key" is a runic word to be found and traced into the sand.*

As soon as Atreus moves to carve runes into the bowl, he falls violently to one knee.

KRATOS
Boy!

Atreus holds one hand to his head, the other reaches out to show Kratos he's okay.

ATREUS
It was the voices again... but different voices. Less angry. They were asking for help.

KRATOS
We are here for the Light. I do not care who they are nor what they want.

ATREUS
(quietly, to himself)
You never care about anything...

KRATOS
(defensively)

You have something to say?

ATREUS

No...

Atreus carefully draws the rune in the sand with his knife. The ALFHEIM LAKE suddenly parts down the middle, exposing that the bottom of the lake is actually the ceiling of an enormous structure below.

ATREUS

Woahhh... look what we found!

The OUTER RING of the FLOOR they're standing on begins to ROTATE, and then the whole platform begins to DESCEND. After a few silent moments—

ATREUS (CONT'D)

Father...

KRATOS

Yes?

ATREUS

The voices I heard, I... it was hard to make out... but way in the back I'm pretty sure I heard... mother.

Kratos contemplates it for a moment, then—

KRATOS

That is not possible.

ATREUS

But I know what I heard—

KRATOS

Atreus. Enough.

Atreus doesn't press the issue.

As the platform continues to descend, a DARK ELF with HUGE HORNS swoops down into the trench, eyes fixed on Kratos. This is the Dark Elf King, *SVARTÁLIǪFURR*.

ATREUS

He looks different. Look at those horns.

KRATOS
(calmly)
Behind me, boy.

Svartáljǫfurr, hovering in front of them, lets out a LOUD SCREAM.

ATREUS
That can't be good.

A swarm of Dark Elves fly in from all directions, leveling their weapons at Kratos and Atreus just as the platform reaches ground level. Svartáljǫfurr watches the melee but flies off when Kratos prevails.

After the fight, Atreus fires back up the conversation his father shut down earlier—

ATREUS
You were wrong back there.

KRATOS
Oh...?

ATREUS
I know mother's voice better than anyone. It was her.

KRATOS
(mounting anger)
She is gone, boy. Speak no more of this.

Atreus, a little taken aback by his father's tone, lets it drop.

ATREUS
(clearly not "fine")
Fine.

INT. TRENCH CHAMBERS (ALFHEIM) – NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Kratos boosts Atreus to an opening in the broken ceiling of an ivy-covered room. With a quick vault, he follows Atreus out and immediately comes face-to-face with SVARTÁLJǪFURR swooping in and grabbing his son. Kratos is SWARMED by Dark Elves as their king attempts to fly off with Atreus, but he shakes them off with a blast of SPARTAN RAGE. Just before the boy is out of range, Kratos gives his AXE a hail-Mary throw, winging Svartáljǫfurr and forcing him to drop Atreus loose.

Atreus runs to his father's side as another wave of enemies attack. After the fight—

ATREUS
(winded)
Thanks.

KRATOS
("you're welcome")
Mm.

Kratos walks to the edge of the platform. An UNLIT LIGHT CRYSTAL is on the other side of a large gap—

ATREUS
No way across here. Too bad the witch's bowstring doesn't work anymore.

Kratos and Atreus enter through a doorway into a circular room. In the middle is what looks like the framework of a LIFT, but the floor is missing. Suspended above it is another LIGHT CRYSTAL—

ATREUS
Hey, you sure the witch is okay? I'd hate to think she died helping us.

KRATOS
(re-assuring)
She knew what she was doing.

ATREUS
(convinced)
Okay.

On the other side of another set of ORNATE METAL DOORS, Kratos and Atreus finally make it to the area where they first saw the dark elves make the main TEMPLE LIGHT BRIDGE disappear. Above them, the BLUE DOOR to the temple can be seen.

ATREUS
Look—the blue temple door. We're almost there. But the bridge crystal's still covered in that stuff...

Kratos drops down to a lower area below the TEMPLE LIGHT BRIDGE CRYSTAL, and destroys the PULSATING TENDRILS covering a WINDOW of PURE LIGHT.

KRATOS
If we cut enough away, the bridge above us should re-appear.

ATREUS
(putting it all together)
Riiight.

KRATOS
Expect resistance.

ATREUS
("shit")
Right.

After a big fight, Kratos presses the LEVIATHAN AXE up against the MAIN SUPPORT TENDRIL ROOT. He holds it there, adjusting his grip so the FROST powers of the axe awaken. After freezing the root, he swings the axe to SHATTER it. They watch as a GIANT LIGHT BRIDGE forms above them.

EXT/INT. TEMPLE OF LIGHT (ALFHEIM) – NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Kratos and Atreus take a LIFT PLATFORM made of LIGHT back up to the surface. Now they can cross the RESTORED LIGHT BRIDGE to reach the ornate BLUE DOOR of the LIGHT TEMPLE. They discover it's shut tight, with no knobs, buttons, or switches nearby.

KRATOS
These doors do not open.

ATREUS
(calling out)
Hello?
(to Kratos)
I don't get it. Why even *have* a door then?

KRATOS
Come. We will find another way in.

They squeeze through a NARROW GAP along the side of the LIGHT TEMPLE, and find themselves inside. Kratos and Atreus drop down into the long hallway of a DILAPIDATED TEMPLE. Once great golden halls are now overgrown with wild vegetation. Broken columns litter the area. It's quite a sight.

As they climb towards the light, they see it's been covered up by a circus tent-sized FLESHY COVERING.

KRATOS
There. The light.

ATREUS
They've covered it up with that stuff... why would they do that?

As they crack-climb towards the light, Atreus sees a LIGHT ELF running across a LIGHT BRIDGE. A DARK ELF emerges from the HIVE, with two more behind, and bum-rushes the Light Elf.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Oh no...

They attack, stabbing him repeatedly.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Why are they killing him? He didn't do anything.

KRATOS
Do not assume. You are seeing the end of a war, boy. You do not know what led to this moment.

ATREUS
But he didn't even defend himself.

KRATOS
That was his choice. We make ours.

Kratos and Atreus reach a sticky FISSURE in the side of a HIVE WALL. They begin to CLIMB.

ATREUS
Hey... when we make it to the light, how do you think we get it into the Bifröst?

DOMNIUS
The witch said to step into it.

ATREUS
She did?

KRATOS
When she was ripped away from this realm.

ATREUS
Oh. How'd I miss that?

KRATOS
You were more concerned with her safety than our goal.

ATREUS
Is that—a bad thing?

KRATOS
If one prevents the other.

A DARK ELF bursts from a hiding place and reaches for them.

ATREUS
Father!

Kratos grabs the Dark Elf by the throat, keeping it at bay.

KRATOS
Quiet! I have him. Your knife, boy!

Atreus reaches for his HUNTING KNIFE and stabs the Dark Elf in the forehead, killing it. Kratos pushes the dead Dark Elf back into its hiding place and continues to climb.

ATREUS
That was close.

They continue down a tight, foreboding hallway towards the Light of Alfheim.

KRATOS
Do not stray from me, boy.

ATREUS
You don't gotta tell *me*.

Atreus sees that they've finally made it to their goal as the glow of the LIGHT OF ALFHEIM washes over his face. It's the only thing he notices.

ATREUS
(excited)
The light—

Kratos interrupts him by placing his massive hand over the boy's mouth. He gives a nod upward, and Atreus sees why his father silenced him—HUNDREDS OF DARK ELVES are swarming on the ceiling, feeding on the light. They don't notice Kratos and Atreus.

KRATOS
Yes—we are near our goal. But we must be careful. Understand?

ATREUS
Got it.

Kratos CHOPS away at one of the primary support TENDRILS holding up the main structure of the HIVE. With one final SWING, the tendril gives way, causing the ground beneath their feet to SHAKE.

KRATOS
Jump, boy!

They jump down to a lower BRIDGE made of the same hive material. Large pieces of the hive begin to crumble. The hive is now on full alert, zeroing in on the presence of the two outsiders. DARK ELVES swarm from all over, blocking Kratos' path to the final support tendril.

KRATOS
Here they come! Stay behind me and protect our flank!

ATREUS
Yes, sir!

Kratos leads a CHARGE into the heart of the DARK ELF SWARM.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
There's so many!

Kratos keeps pushing the pack forward, trying to inch ever closer to the FINAL TENDRIL.

KRATOS
Shorten the time between your volleys!

ATREUS
What happened to "accuracy over speed?!"

KRATOS
There are many targets—you will not miss!

They watch as swarms of Dark Elves converge on them. The boy begins to panic.

ATREUS
They're everywhere!!

KRATOS
A narrow path negates superior numbers. Stay focused!

Kratos carves through the horde on the winding bridge ahead, using the terrain to his advantage like a true Spartan. Ultimately, they clear the path and find the final HIVE TENDRIL that needs to be destroyed.

ATREUS
That's the last one! Hurry!

Kratos takes several chops at the TENDRIL, before a BIG SWING of his AXE leaves only a thin bit of sinew holding the structure together. Kratos REACHES for Atreus.

KRATOS
Boy!

Atreus VAULTS up into his father's arms as Kratos takes one FINAL CHOP at the tendril. The hive COLLAPSES, shattering under its own weight.

THE LIGHT OF ALFHEIM IS RELEASED.

Kratos and son free fall for a second...before a brilliant RELEASE OF LIGHT illuminates STRUCTURES and FLOORS that BREAK THEIR FALL. They CRASH onto a FLOOR OF LIGHT with a THUD, Atreus on his stomach near the COLUMN OF LIGHT and Kratos on his back farther away.

After the dust settles from the collapsing hive...

KRATOS
Are you injured?

ATREUS
I'm fine.

They are now within reach of their goal. Atreus runs ahead, towards the intense blue-white shaft of light. He stands in awe of the brilliance in front of him.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Wow... It's beautiful...

The "SCAFFOLDING" that made up the body of the temple "fills in", floor by floor, with the Light Elves' MAGICAL LIGHT STRUCTURES. Atreus takes in the sight—

ATREUS (CONT'D)
(in awe)

The light... it's making the whole temple reappear. It's the source of all of it.

Once completed, a magnificent and ornate LIGHT TEMPLE is revealed (thanks to the unobstructed column of light shooting straight into the sky). The LIGHT OF ALFHEIM now stretches out far beyond its earlier radius, bathing the surrounding land with light.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Wait—it's... it's singing.
(listening)
I hear...

Atreus runs toward the light.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
(growing excited)
I hear her. I told you I heard her!

Atreus stands, and with no fear, plays his fingers against the light. The surface rippling and shimmering in response. A giddy laugh may escape from Atreus as he freely experiments with this new toy.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Do you think she's in there?

Atreus alters his experiment by pushing his fingers into the light. His expression changes from playful to grimaced determination.

Atreus pushes his hand further into the light, reaching the middle of his forearm before there is a sharp CRACKLE and POP, like a single firecracker going off. Atreus pulls back with a yelp, shaking the painful vibration out of his arm.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
That REALLY hurt. Felt like my hand was on fire.

Atreus goes back to gingerly exploring the surface of the light. Kratos approaches Atreus and examines the light cautiously.

KRATOS
Stay here.

ATREUS
But I want to—

KRATOS
Stay. Here.

Kratos holds his axe out to Atreus, motioning for him to take it.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Only use it as a last resort.

ATREUS
(a little excited)
You're giving me your axe?

KRATOS
I am letting you hold my axe. It is not a gift.

ATREUS
(still excited)
Still...

Kratos takes the Bifröst off of his belt, ready to push it into the light.

Kratos swings the enormous fist holding the Bifröst towards the wall of light. It punctures the surface, sinking deeply into the light. Kratos grimaces from the pain as he pulls himself closer to the light. Pushing forward, Kratos fights back a SCREAM with each step forward. Eventually, the pain is so great that even he can't stay silent. A ringing CACOPHONY OF VOICES rises and the intensity of the controller vibration reaches its apex as the light swallows him.

FLASH TO WHITE.

10. INSIDE THE LIGHT

INT/EXT. INSIDE THE LIGHT (ALFHEIM) – NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

When his vision clears, Kratos is standing in a world of black, with a single spotlight highlighting him from above. He looks down to find himself empty-handed of weapons, bifröst, and shield. When he speaks, his words ECHO in the darkness—

KRATOS
(to himself)
What is this—?

A FEMALE VOICE singing a HAUNTING MELODY lilts in as the POUCH OF ASHES on Kratos' belt rises up and floats in front of him. When it begins to float away, the pouch unwraps itself into a BALL OF PURE LIGHT illuminating a path into the darkness—

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Faye?

Kratos follows the MELODIC VOICE of the PURE LIGHT into a SPECTRAL FOREST. It is a dreamlike, desaturated dimension, outside the influence of natural law. The woodlands around us are familiar... and you might recognize it as the forest around Kratos' home—except pitch black and illuminated only by the ball of light.

As Kratos follows the spectral orb, the VOICE OF ATREUS drifts into the soundscape. His words sound close, intimate, as if speaking quietly into our ear... yet he is nowhere to be seen.

ATREUS (O.S.)
You have to come back. You left me here alone...

KRATOS
Atreus?

ATREUS (O.S.)
...alone with *him.*

The Ball of Pure Light darts between desaturated trees, singing its haunting refrain, staying ahead of Kratos as he chases it.

ATREUS (CONT'D, O.S.)
He always leaves. He's never here. He doesn't want me
and he never will.

Ahead, the Ball of Pure Light floats towards KRATOS' HOME. We watch it slip right into the front door.

Kratos follows inside, and as soon as the door opens, there is a FLASH OF LIGHT.

We are no longer in the forest...

...but standing on the bridge of a SAILING VESSEL. It floats through mist, but we neither see nor hear ocean waves around us... as if the boat was flying. There is only the haunting melody in front of us.

The Ball of Light speeds along ahead of the boat, and Atreus' VOICE returns...

ATREUS (CONT'D, O.S.)
I don't know him and he doesn't know me. Doesn't seem to want to.
(growing anger)
I'm strong. *I'm smart.* I'm not what he thinks I am. I *know* better.

Another FLASH OF LIGHT, and now Kratos stands on a DESATURATED BEACH overlooked by a STATUE OF THOR. The Ball of Light darts into a SHORELINE CAVE ahead. Its haunting song echoes against the cave walls. He chases after it...

ATREUS (CONT'D, O.S.)
(anger reaches climax)
He doesn't talk to me. Doesn't teach me. It should have been him. Do you hear me? *Him*... not you.

Kratos follows the Ball of Light up a crack-climb, and there is another FLASH OF LIGHT. Rather than a shoreline wall, Kratos now hangs off the side of a mountain, dizzyingly high, miles up.

ATREUS (CONT'D, O.S.)
(calm now, ashamed)
Except... I don't mean that. You know I love him. I just wish he was better. I know he can be.

Kratos keeps climbing the mountain until he emerges from a TRAP DOOR into the interior of his HOME. The Ball of Light whisks past Atreus, who stands next to the SHROUDED BODY of the MOTHER. The body is wrapped in RED CLOTH, arms crossed over chest. Atreus' face is buried in his arms as he speaks to her.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
So if he tries... *I'll* try. But if he doesn't...
(half-whispers)
...please come back. I know you're out there somewhere.

Atreus does not see or acknowledge Kratos as he jogs past the boy, trying to catch up to the singing light. Stepping through the back door of his home causes another FLASH OF LIGHT.

Kratos finds himself on one end of a bridge leading to a mysterious mountain SHRINE. In the distance, a mountain peak resembling GIANT'S FINGERS, four of them, pointed skyward. Crossing the bridge, he catches up to the spectral ball. The haunting music swells as he reaches out his hand to grasp the beautiful PURE LIGHT...

KRATOS
Faye...

...but a SCREAM emerges from the beauty, and a SMALL HAND grabs his shoulder from behind, pulling him backwards—

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Wait!

He's falling...

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Come back!!

...ripped away before he could reach her.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
NO!!!

—out of the light!

FLASH FROM WHITE:

INT/EXT. TEMPLE OF LIGHT (ALFHEIM) – NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Kratos lands on his back, blinking away the blinding brightness as Atreus comes into view.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
(angry/disoriented)
...NO! What have you done? Why did you do that?

Atreus is clearly startled by his father yelling right in his face. He doesn't hesitate to fire back with a surprising amount of anger all his own—

ATREUS
I saved you! You were trapped in there. I waited and I waited but you wouldn't come out... So I pulled you out.

KRATOS
Boy... I was gone only...

As his eyes adjust to the light chamber, Kratos sits up and surveys the room. It is obvious he was gone longer than the few moments he experienced in the light. The chamber is full of DEAD DARK ELVES.

Atreus paces angrily, pulling arrows out of corpses. The LEVIATHAN AXE is seen sticking up out of a pile of dismembered bodies, where Atreus must have stood his ground for who-knows-how-long.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
...moments.

ATREUS
NO. You've been gone a long, long time.

Atreus begins COUGHING as he speaks, choking on his own rage. This is not mere anger or exhaustion—it's a sickness that gives Kratos pause, adding to his disorientation.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
(angrily)
I didn't know what to do. You left me here. AGAIN. Why don't you care?

Atreus shoves his father for emphasis before turning away to wipe blood from his mouth, COUGHING and GASPING for air. Though clearly struggling, there's a harder edge to him now that was not there before. Stubbornly determined not to give in to the sickness, he resumes collecting arrows from dead Dark Elves.

KRATOS
(confused)
I... That's impossible.

The boy's cough subsides, though his anger does not—

ATREUS
(impatient)
We should go before they come back.
(bitterly)
I hope you got what you needed.

Kratos looks down at the now glowing Bifröst crystal.

KRATOS
(quietly, regretfully)
Yes.

Atreus stomps over to an INACTIVE LIGHT BRIDGE CRYSTAL and points at it.

ATREUS
(attitude)
Look! There's our exit, but there's no light to make a bridge. We're trapped. And the witch's bowstring is useless.

KRATOS pulls the GLOWING BIFRÖST from his belt.

KRATOS
Boy... your bow.

Atreus sees the BRILLIANT LIGHT emanating from the Bifröst, and quickly unslings his BOW.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Hold it out.

Atreus does as he's told, and Kratos reaches out, slowly running the Bifröst over the entire length of the bowstring. As he does, the bowstring becomes saturated with the BIFRÖST LIGHT and takes on a glow of its own.

Kratos puts the Bifröst back onto his belt as the boy admires the glowing bowstring.

Atreus stands next to the BRIDGE CRYSTAL, ready to fire a glowing BIFRÖST ARROW.

KRATOS
On my mark, loose your arrow into the stone.

The BIFRÖST ARROW strikes the bridge crystal, ILLUMINATING it and creating a LIGHT BRIDGE.

ATREUS
It worked...

KRATOS
We can now make our way back. Come.

Dropping down to a small platform, Atreus notices an ALFHEIM LIGHT CRYSTAL lying in the middle of a lower floor—

ATREUS
(with attitude)
There's a Light Crystal ahead—just laying there. Maybe it'll help us get out of this stupid place.

When Kratos picks up the FALLEN CRYSTAL—

ATREUS
Where you taking *that?*

As Kratos carries the fallen crystal to the next area—

ATREUS
You gonna carry that everywhere?

KRATOS
I just might.

Kratos and son reach the end of the curving hallway. Ahead of them, Atreus spots the BLUE TEMPLE DOOR they couldn't open from the outside. There appears to be no seam on this side either. On a platform above the door sits a SAND BOWL.

ATREUS
(annoyed)
Oh look. The blue door that's not a door.

KRATOS
...and a sand bowl.

ATREUS
But how do you expect me to reach it?

Kratos deposits the crystal in a second receptacle upstairs. When shot with the Bifröst crystal, a LIGHT BRIDGE appears in an area above, creating a pathway to the sand bowl.

Around the corner, a CRAWLSPACE can be found high on the wall. Kratos boosts Atreus up.

KRATOS
Climb up, have a look.

ATREUS
Not like I have a choice...

Atreus climbs up, crosses the light bridge, and reaches the sand bowl. On solving the puzzle—

Atreus carefully draws the rune in the sand with his knife.

Suddenly, a SPARK ignites in the middle of the BLUE DOOR. It burns both upward and downward in a line, creating a SEAM at the door's center

ATREUS
So it's a door after all.

KRATOS pushes open the enormous DOUBLE DOORS of the LIGHT TEMPLE. As soon as they open, a PARADE OF LIGHT ELVES, waiting outside the temple, push past them, reclaiming the temple. Atreus

turns around as he looks at them in silent awe as they float majestically past him... but as he tracks them, his eyes land on his father, and his wonder turns to a scowl.

Kratos and Atreus walk the MAIN LIGHT BRIDGE in silence. When they reach the middle of the bridge, SVARTÁLJQFURR rockets past them and stops to HOVER over the LIGHT CRYSTAL LIFT they used earlier.

ATREUS
Great. The one with the horns is back. What does he want now?

As if in response to the boy's question, the horned king SHOUTS SOMETHING GUTTERAL and flies down into the open trench.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
I hate that guy.

KRATOS
He will be back.

As they approach the empty dock—

ATREUS
(annoyed)
Oh, no... the boat isn't here—it's still back at the other side of the lake!

KRATOS
Then we go back the way we came. The lift.

INT. TRENCH CHAMBERS (ALFHEIM) – NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)
Kratos and son ride down the light elevator down back into the trench. The trench above them shuts, encasing them in darkness with only a few light sources to guide them.

ATREUS
Great. Now I can barely see.

KRATOS
There is light. Make do.

Dark Elves appear after the trench shuts. Kratos and son fight them off. Kratos and son make their way to the exit lift ahead of them.

ATREUS
Finally. We can use the same sand bowl that brought us down the first time. I want to get out of here.

On using the sand bowl, SVARTÁLJǪFURR the Dark Elf King flies down and starts the BOSS FIGHT.

KRATOS plunges the SPEAR into Svartáljǫfurr's chest. As Atreus runs over, the creature struggles to breathe at Kratos' feet. He stares at the boy—a look of sadness and disappointment emerging on his strange face. BLOOD bubbles from his lips as he tries to speak—

DARK ELF KING
(gasping)
Ykkarr... striðr... glapræði... Ofríki munu... þjá... allt.
(translation, do not subtitle)
You... grave... mistake. Oppressors will... enslave... all.

Svartáljǫfurr dies.

ATREUS
(disbelief)
No. That can't be.

KRATOS
What did it say?

ATREUS
That we made a "grave mistake." Something about "the oppressors enslaving everyone." Did we help the wrong side?

KRATOS
I—

ATREUS
Let me guess... you're gonna be smug and say you told me we shouldn't get involved.

KRATOS
That is enough!

As the platform slowly them out of the darkened trench—

ATREUS (CONT'D)
(mocking, to himself)
"Boy... read this. Boy... what's *that* say?" Only time you want to talk to me is when you need something.

KRATOS
(angry)
Do you want to tell me something?

ATREUS
(snapping)
I said, the only time you care to talk to me is when you need me to translate for you. If mom was here—

KRATOS
(snapping back)
If your mother was still alive, we would not be here at all.

Atreus, taken aback, says nothing. Kratos knows he's gone too far.

KRATOS
(sighing)
Atreus—

ATREUS
Forget it.

Kratos is at a loss for how to make things right.

EXT. LAKE OF LIGHT (ALFHEIM) – NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

The platform reaches the top and the boat is at the dock where they left it. They get in and row away.

In the boat, on the water, Kratos rows. Atreus breaks the silence.

ATREUS
So... was she in the light?

KRATOS
Who.

ATREUS
You know.

Kratos ponders whether to lie, then—

KRATOS
No. She was not there.

He says, looking his father right in his eyes:

ATREUS
(bitterly)
Not like you would you even care if she was...

Kratos drops his oar, straightens his posture and leans forward, getting right in the boy's face. He speaks quickly and succinctly.

KRATOS
Mind your tongue, boy! Until our journey is over, *one* of us must remain focused. Do not mistake my silence for lack of grief! Mourn how you wish, leave me to my own.

Atreus is stunned into silence. He didn't anticipate this reaction. He's coasting on his own anger from being left behind to fend for himself, but he didn't intend to poke the bear so firmly, so soon.

ATREUS
(quietly)
I'm sorry... I didn't realize...

Now it's Kratos who didn't anticipate the reaction. He realizes maybe his outburst was not a proportional response.

KRATOS
No... Why would you?

Kratos sits back. He picks up the oar, sets across his lap, and looks directly at Atreus.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
You do not know my ways. I know it has not been easy.

Kratos gives Atreus a quick nod of support, picks up the oar, and places it back in the water.

Immediately after, as Kratos continues to paddle the boat—

KRATOS
In the light... I felt only moments pass. If that is of some comfort to you.

ATREUS
That's... good to know. Really.

Kratos and Atreus make their way back toward the long bridge to Týr's temple. After a long silence—

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Father... I have a confession to make. All those voices in my head... well, this wasn't the first time. Back when we met Brok... his animal warned me about something hiding in the trees. That's why she didn't want to cross.

KRATOS
She told you?

ATREUS
Well... I could just feel what she was feeling... what she was afraid of.

KRATOS
(understanding)
Mmm. It happens again, you tell me. Understand?

ATREUS
(quietly)
I promise.

Kratos and Atreus dock on a beach and make their way back to Týr's Temple.

INT. TÝR'S TEMPLE/REALM TRAVEL ROOM (ALFHEIM) – NIGHT

Back inside the Realm Travel Room Kratos uses the Light of Alfheim in the fully replenished Bifröst to power their return to—

11. A PRAYER FOR THE GIANTS

INT. TÝR'S TEMPLE/BROK'S SHOP (MIDGARD) – DAY

Kratos and Atreus return to Midgard, and exit the Realm Travel Room, leading them to Brok's Shop.

ATREUS
Brok! We just came back from another realm and we met your brother. Wait—not in that order.

Brok stops hammering, wipes his brow with his sleeve, and gives them a suspicious look.

BROK
Did you let that seed-sop put hand to your blade? You do know he lost his talent, right? Just up and left him one day—tried taking me down with him. Did he botch up our girl?

Kratos hands Brok the LEVIATHAN AXE.

KRATOS
Quite the opposite...

Brok gives Sindri's handiwork a quick disapproving squint, and picks up his HAMMER.

BROK
Hm... well, even a blind pig farts up a truffle now and again. But you know what really counts?

He SMASHES the hammer down once on the cheek of the axe.

BROK (CONT'D)
(leaning in for emphasis)
Consistency. And I got that comin' outta ALLA my parts.

Brok hands the axe back to Kratos, who inspects Brok's "work".

KRATOS
What did you do?

BROK
It's better.

Kratos lets out an annoyed SIGH.

EXT. LAKE OF NINE (MIDGARD) - DAY

While boating in the lake, they suddenly witness a strange sight—a REALM TOWER, like the others in the lake, FLICKERS out of nowhere, and then disappears again.

ATREUS
Did you see something out there? That tower...

KRATOS
I see no tower.

ATREUS
Maybe I'm seeing things...

Later, while traveling in the Boat—

ATREUS
How about one more story?

KRATOS
One more... There was a tale of a frog. His pond had dried up, so the frog and his son left to find a new home. They found a well. The son saw the water and made to jump in, but the father stopped him. He saw that the well was deep, and once inside they would not be able escape if the water dried up again. Wisely, they moved on.

ATREUS
That's it?

KRATOS
Yes.

ATREUS
That's really not a story. If The son jumped in, it would be a story.

KRATOS
Then he would be trapped, and starve while the father watched helplessly.

ATREUS
See? That's a story.

Kratos steers the boat toward the Realm Tower that leads to the foothills of the Mountain. There, they make their way back to Sindri's "Sky Mover" gondola.

EXT. FOOTHILLS/GONDOLA LIFT (MIDGARD) - DAY

As they ride the gondola lift back up to the Black Breath—

ATREUS
Father... do you... do you think I could carry her *now*?

KRATOS
No.

ATREUS
But I—

KRATOS
(calmly)
I said no.

Atreus doesn't press the issue.

ATREUS
(dejectedly)
Okay.

They ride the rest of the way in silence.

Stepping off the gondola lift platform, the face on the mountain comes into view—

ATREUS
So who do you think carved the face in the mountain?

KRATOS
You would know better than I.

Atreus smiles at the rare admission from his father.

ATREUS
(smiling)
Thanks.

KRATOS
Now watch your step. Carelessness will only delay us.

And just like that, a reminder of just how far they have to go follows the brief compliment.

EXT. FOOTHILLS/STONE STAIRS (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Once more they reach the MOUNTAIN PATH shrouded with the BLACK FOG.

ATREUS
Well there's the Black Breath again. What do we do now?

KRATOS
We see if the witch was right.

Kratos activates the Bifröst as he approaches the Black Breath. The fog retreats, parting as he moves and then dissipating entirely.

ATREUS
It's working! She *was* right!

KRATOS
Come. Let us finish this.

Kratos dispels the last of the Black Breath, and loops the Bifröst onto his belt.

Kratos leaps to a long CRACK in the sheer rock wall, followed quickly by Atreus. As they climb—

ATREUS
You know... mother said the Giants used to visit the Midgard mountains before they disappeared.

KRATOS
Disappeared?

ATREUS
Yeah. I guess they just up and left one day. No one knows why.

KRATOS
Perhaps they returned to their home.

ATREUS
To Jötunheim? Maybe.
(thinking it over)
I wonder if the face in the mountain was a tribute to some important Giant?

Finally reaching the MOUTH of the face carved into the mountain, Kratos and Atreus pull themselves up to the entrance.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
The mouth... we made it.

Kratos and Atreus dispel the last bit of Black Breath to come face-to-face with a LARGE WOODEN DOOR. In a diamond at its center, is a GOLD RELIEF depicting a MOUNTAIN in the shape of a HAND.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
That emblem—it matches the one on the door to Jötunheim in Týr's temple. The Giants *did* come here!

INT. MOUNTAIN/STAG ROOM (MIDGARD) – DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Kratos and Atreus walk through the mountain tunnel, light peeking out ahead. As they get closer, a shape comes into view...

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Is that... a deer?

They approach a large room bisected by a CHASM. On the other side, a large STATUE of a STAG with the body of a MAN, seated on a THRONE and holding a tall SCEPTRE stares down at them.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
I don't remember stories of a giant with a deer head. Wonder who he is?

On the near side, a LEVER juts out in the middle of a semicircular dais, a SAND BOWL at the center, bookended by two PEDESTALS, one empty, one holding an UNLIT LIGHT CRYSTAL.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
No way across, but there's a sand bowl.

After the puzzle is solved, Atreus draws the Rune in the sand bowl, and the STATUE responds, tapping its sceptre three times, then emitting a BEAM OF LIGHT that reveals a hidden door.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Oh! Thought maybe there'd be a bridge.

KRATOS
Rrrn. Your Giants mean to test us further.

As they traverse the tunnel behind the door, Kratos raises a topic with Atreus for once—

KRATOS (CONT'D)
These passages seem too small for Giants.

Atreus GIGGLES.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
(deadpan)
Why do you laugh?

The boy stifles his laughter.

ATREUS
Oh... you're serious.

KRATOS
I am always serious.

ATREUS
I forget... mom always said you never took an interest in history. Giants are just a race, like Elves and Huldrafolk. It doesn't mean they're *big*.

KRATOS
What of the World Serpent?

ATREUS
Okay, in *that* case, giant *also* means big. But there's only one of him.

At the end of the passage, they reach a large cavern. Atreus takes in the scenery—

ATREUS
(in awe)
Just look at this place. It feels so—

KRATOS
Dead.

ATREUS
I was gonna say "ancient," but dead works too.

Kratos and Atreus' path ends at a small crawl-tunnel. Littering the area is DOZENS OF DEAD BODIES.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Uhh... this is a *lot* of bodies.

They enter the extremely cramped passageway. It's filled with SKELETONS—seemingly killed by an assortment of TRAPS.

KRATOS
Tell me what you see.

ATREUS
(piecing it together)
Well... they look like men, not Giants.

KRATOS
Correct. Thieves seeking treasure. See the traps?

ATREUS
Oh yeah. Lucky for us they set 'em all off.

KRATOS
Be grateful these stay dead.

After pushing through the barricade at the end of the skeleton-filled tunnel, we emerge to see the rear view of the STAG STATUE—we are now across the chasm.

ATREUS
The statue! We made it across!

Atreus sees WRITING on the back side of the STAG'S THRONE and races over.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Ohhh... this is *Duraþrór*, one of the four stags of the World Tree. He's supposed to watch the entrance to Jötunheim while the giants sleep. Think he's still there?

KRATOS
I do not know.

Kratos finds a platform that leads to a long crack climb.

ATREUS
Wow. "The highest peak in the realms." Think Mom knew this was the Giant's mountain?

KRATOS
No. Her request has been more... complicated, than she could have foreseen.

As they climb, Kratos spots some Runes etched into the rock.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Those runes...

ATREUS
It's a name, I think—*Hrædlyr*. It means "terror".

As Kratos and Atreus jump down to a nearby landing, they find a SMALL CRUMPLED HIDE.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
What's that?

The boy trots over and PICKS UP the hide. It's tangled in STRING with a SMALL BLOCK dangling off it. The block has a SMALL CANDLE melted to it.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Weird. There's a candle all tangled up with string and some sort of animal hide. Some kind of lantern?

Atreus pulls up the candle holder and examines it.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
No wick though.

KRATOS
That is of no use to us. The Bifröst lights our way.

Atreus puts down the lantern and FOLLOWS his father.

INT. MOUNTAIN/MINE (MIDGARD) – DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Kratos and son emerge from a passage leading up to large open space full of primitive MINING MACHINERY. Most prominent is a giant 2-pronged metal CLAW hanging from above to roughly eye level. As soon as it comes into view—

ATREUS
Whoa... what *is* all this? Where are we?

KRATOS
A mine. And if this claw reaches the summit, our goal is near.

Exploring, Atreus makes an observation—

ATREUS
The machinery in here looks almost dwarven, but the stonework... that's *definitely* Jötun. You know, I think the Giants not only mined the mountain, but actually *lived* here.

Nearby, Atreus finds another set of runes. Strangely, this one looks like there are two distinctly different carving styles.

ATREUS
That's funny...

KRATOS
How?

ATREUS
One hand wrote "Jötnar only" and another wrote "and also Dwarves." Should we add to it?

KRATOS
No.

On the platform before reaching the pull-chain is another BROKEN SKY LANTERN on the floor.

ATREUS
What could they be for? There's something special about them. I can feel it.

Kratos and Atreus maneuver a derelict MINING CART underneath the giant CLAW and release a giant stone COUNTERWEIGHT to carry them upwards into the hollow of the Mountain.

During the rather long ride up on top of the cart—

ATREUS
Something... feels strange up there. We're heading into danger.

KRATOS
Do not concern yourself with what might be. Focus on what is... and be vigilant.

ATREUS
Yes, sir.

When the cart is almost at the apex of the pulley system, Atreus realizes it won't carry them to their goal.

ATREUS
Not the top... but we're closer.

Atreus spies another SKY LANTERN and runs up to it—

ATREUS
Wait! That one's not broken!

He holds it above his head, looking underneath it and reaching for the CANDLE. He pulls it out and pauses, seeing a NOTE attached to the end with a STRING.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
There's a note... a Giant's prayer. They're asking their ancestors to watch over them... to guide them home.

Atreus studies the candle and lantern. He then looks up the hollow of the mountain above them. A SMILE flashes across his face.

He sets the lantern down and pinches the CANDLE'S BURNT WICK, rolling it between his fingers. Using the SOOT on his fingertip, he quickly scrawls something on the back of the note.

KRATOS
(impatiently)
Boy—

ATREUS
(excitedly)
Wait! I think I know how it works...

He quickly pulls TWO RUNE STONES from his pouch and strikes them together over the candle's wick. It LIGHTS UP, and Atreus carefully places it back into the lantern. He brings it over to his father, eager to show him what he has just figured out.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Watch.

Atreus releases the lantern and it wobbles up through the air, ascending the mountain interior. The light from the lantern ILLUMINATES its path upward, revealing the MASSIVE STRUCTURE and CARVED WALLS in the darkness. Kratos and Atreus are silent as they watch it. Then—

ATREUS (CONT'D)
(whispers)
Wow...

Atreus cranes his neck back to look up, leaning close to his father. Kratos initially recoils slightly and looks down at him but seeing the expression on his son's face tempers his apprehension. He LEANS IN to allow the boy to fully rest against him.

KRATOS
What did you write?

ATREUS
I asked them to watch over mother.
(softly)
Do you think they'll watch over *us* on our way to the top?

KRATOS
Come, boy. It is a long way up.

12. TERROR IN THE MOUNTAIN

INT. MOUNTAIN/UPPER MINE (MIDGARD) – DAY (CONTINUOUS)

A long STONE PATH stretches out in front of them. When they approach a PILLAR adorned with a GOLDEN MASK, SPARKS begin to build in the face's mouth.

ATREUS
Whoa. What's it—

KRATOS
Stay back!

Suddenly, a STREAM of FIRE shoots out, cutting off their path.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
(annoyed)
More *tests*.

ATREUS
Dwarves must have carved these tunnels around the Giant's traps. Good thing too.
(thinking it through)
Well... good for me anyway.

Atreus takes the tunnel to evade the fire traps while Kratos times his jumps to get through.

Atreus notices another platform in the distance—

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Another mining lift! It may not be as long a way up as we thought.

Kratos shoves a pylon over the side and the platform starts moving upwards.

Atreus looks around for a minute, then has a thought.

ATREUS
Hey, when we get to the summit, how far do you think we'll be able to see? The lake? The World Serpent? Our house?

KRATOS
("calm down")
We will see when we get there. Until then, eyes open.

They ride for a few moments in silence. Then—

ATREUS
Father? After we scatter Mother's ashes... what then? What comes next?

KRATOS
Nothing comes next. We go home.

ATREUS
That's it? The adventure is over?

KRATOS
For now. But we will have much to do. You were right earlier—on the boat after cutting down the last tree. You said it felt like something had changed. It has, and

KRATOS (CONT'D)
our home is no longer safe. But it will be again. And we must continue your training.

ATREUS
(contented)
Okay.

Kratos and Atreus continue riding the mining lift.

ATREUS
We're almost at the summit. Nothing's gonna stop us—

Out of the darkness, a DRAGON suddenly emerges from the cave wall—it is HRÆZLYR, the "terror" warned of in runes. It breathes a BEAM of PURE ELECTRICITY, sending our heroes scattering for cover.

ATREUS
AAHHH!!!

The dragon grabs the lift with a TALONED CLAW and pulls it closer for another attack.

KRATOS
Calm yourself, boy! And stay behind me!

ATREUS
Yes, sir!

The player will first need to attack the dragon's claws, which occasionally pull back and then slash out at Kratos and Atreus.

The dragon gnashes on the mining lift before throwing it against the sheer cave wall. One of the LIFT SPIKES sticks. Kratos wedges himself between the wall and the platform, trying to push it free.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
(a little panicked)
What are you doing?!

Kratos pushes the lift off the wall, swinging them closer to the dragon.

KRATOS
Be ready!

The lift's spike smashes into the dragon. Reeling from the impact, the dragon blasts open a nearby passageway to crawl out. As he does, his tail hits the top of the lift, dragging Kratos and son with him through the passageway.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Hold on!

The platform is dragged through the passage entrance before becoming unhooked from the dragon's tail as he scampers off down the tunnel.

After the dust settles—

ATREUS
Phew... That was intense.

INT/EXT. MOUNTAIN/DRAGON ARENA (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Kratos and son walk a winding path from the busted platform up to a cave mouth leading outside.

ATREUS
(over-excitedly)
I can't believe we fought a dragon! I was aiming for his eyes, but I kept losing my footing. Do you think this is their home? Did they move in after the Giants left? Or are they WHY the Giants left?

KRATOS
Boy. The air grows thin here. No more questions. Breathe.

ATREUS
(panting a little)
Oh... yes... I see...

They continue along, and after a gap jump start to hear someone screaming as if they were being attacked.

SINDRI (O.S.)
(in the distance)
Ahh! Ahhh! Go away! Shoo! Shoo! Ahh! Help! Help!!!

ATREUS
Do you hear that? It sounds like someone screaming.

They arrive on the scene and find Sindri being attacked.

From a distance, KRATOS and ATREUS watch SINDRI hiding from a searching HRÆZLYR. The dwarf SCREAMS in abject terror. Atreus makes to run to his aid but is restrained by his father.

KRATOS
Wait, boy.

ATREUS
It's Sindri! Can you kill something that big?

KRATOS
If we can catch it off balance.

ATREUS
I can distract him.

He starts towards Sindri. Kratos stops him again, grabbing him by the arm.

KRATOS
What are you doing?

SINDRI
Ahh!!

They both turn to see the dragon SNAP his teeth in Sindri's vicinity. Sindri hides as the dragon SNIFFS around, ever closer.

Atreus turns back to his father with a look of desperation.

ATREUS
We *have* to help him.

Kratos quickly assesses the situation, and lets go of his son's hand.

KRATOS
You break right. Find an angle. Wait for my mark.

Atreus gives him a grateful nod—

ATREUS
Thank you.

—and sneaks off in the direction of Sindri without looking back.

Atreus hops across a series of ROCK PILLARS spanning a chasm, firing arrows as he goes to provide Kratos the distraction he needs to take the dragon by surprise.

ATREUS
Hey ugly! Over here!

Atreus races over to Sindri's safe spot behind a MASSIVE rock.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
(to Sindri)
You okay?

SINDRI
For now!

Kratos runs left along the mountain ridge, JUMPS onto the distracted dragon's back, and runs the distance up to the beast's head. With a leap, he brings the axe down hard — but it deflects off its hide, with no effect.

Kratos jumps down to where Atreus is firing arrows. Hrælyr INHALES with tremendous force—our heroes' feet slide beneath them as they're pulled in. Kratos SHOVES his son behind the rocks for safety, and hurls himself forward into the dragon's MOUTH, plunging his axe into the monster's TONGUE.

After landing several blows to the vulnerable area, Kratos is eventually spit out into the Arena. Zoom on Atreus and Sindri running on the upper catwalk. Kratos calls out to them.

KRATOS
GO!

Kratos discovers a stash of SHATTER CRYSTALS that explode when exposed to electricity. By throwing one at Hrælyr as it charges an attack, he's able to stun the beast long enough to deal it some damage.

Eventually, the dragon will transition over to the other side of the arena, and attempt to take a bite out of Sindri and Atreus. The crane mechanism jiggles a bit with a subtle suggestion. Kratos calls out:

KRATOS
I have a plan! Be ready to lower the crane on my mark!

ATREUS
But... I don't know how this thing works!

KRATOS
I do not care! Be ready!

Eventually, the dragon's head falls.

KRATOS
NOW!!!

The crane's claw drops onto Hrælyr's head. Kratos springs into action with a roar of effort, throwing his weight to drive one claw-point into the dragon's exposed side, and trapping a large piece of shatter crystal between its massive head and the other claw point.

The dragon rears back for a desperate electrical attack, but it sets off the large crystal and BLOWS OUT ITS OWN BRAINS. The dragon collapses, his open jaws landing harmlessly on either side of Kratos, who stands still in triumph.

ATREUS
Wow. We actually did it!
(to Sindri, proud)
And *you*—

The boy moves toward him with arms outstretched, like he's going to give Sindri a hug. The dwarf is appreciative, but wants no part of the touching.

SINDRI
(astonished)
But—but—but—nobody's killed a dragon for hundreds of years... not since the Grand Culling of the Wyrms!
(touched & surprised)
And unless I'm mistaken, you did all that... for *me!*

KRATOS
You *are* mistaken. The dragon was simply in our path... nothing more.

SINDRI
You deny it all you want, but you saved me. And that...

He reaches deep into a SMALL MAGICAL BAG, and his entire arm disappears—as if the inside is bigger than the outside (like a D&D Bag of Holding or Dr. Who's TARDIS).

SINDRI (CONT'D)
...deserves compensation.

Sindri pulls a BUNDLE OF ARROWS from the magical bag and presents them to Atreus.

ATREUS
What are these?

SINDRI
(proudly)
Braided mistletoe arrows. Straighter than Heimdall and perfectly weighted.

ATREUS
(disappointed)
Oh. Thanks?

SINDRI
(a little insulted)
Oh, okay... Hold on...uh...

He reaches back into the magical bag and pulls out a DARK ELF'S SPEAR.

SINDRI (CONT'D)
Ew, not that. Um...

As he talks, he pulls out several RANDOM OBJECTS, looks at them, and rejects them back into the bag. He pulls out the following *existing* props: An ORNATE HORN; a PICKAXE; a large STIRRING SPOON.

SINDRI (CONT'D)
(changing the subject)
Have you seen my brother again?

ATREUS
(innocently)
Yeah! He said you lost your talent.

Kratos SNORTS, amused by the boy's lack of tact.

SINDRI
(rejecting a series of items as he speaks)
Oh, and that I'm selfish (no), I'm sure. That I value a weapon's look (no) over its purpose. That I'm pretentious (no!) and uptight. Fussy. I know what he thinks. But he can't hurt me any—

Sindri pulls a DEAD FISH from the magical bag—

SINDRI (CONT'D)
AH!!

—and drops it.

SINDRI (CONT'D)
(To Atreus)
Burn that.

Kratos starts to walk off impatiently.

KRATOS
I do not have time for this.

SINDRI
No! No-no-no, wait-wait-wait-wait... I have a better idea.

Kratos stops and turns back.

KRATOS
(growing annoyed)
What?

SINDRI
I just need a tooth from that dragon.

Kratos walks up to the DEAD DRAGON, and with a few swings of the Axe, loosens a TOOTH.

SINDRI (CONT'D)
Watch where you grab... oh... nevermind. So unclean. So, so unclean. Oh, the smell!

Kratos yanks the tooth from the dragon's mouth.

SINDRI (CONT'D)
Perfect—that should do.

Kratos offers Sindri the TOOTH.

SINDRI
Yeeeah... I'm not touching that. Just hold it out.

Sindri reaches into his BAG, pulling out a BLUE POWDER—and BLOWS it into the open root of the tooth. It begins to CRACKLE and SPARK with LIGHTNING.

SINDRI (CONT'D)
Now run that along the string of your son's bow.

Kratos looks at Sindri with a mix of confusion and distrust.

SINDRI (CONT'D)
Just humor me.

Kratos kneels down, holding out the SPARKING DRAGON'S TOOTH.

KRATOS
Atreus... your bow.

Atreus sees the SPARKS crackling from the tooth, and quickly unslings his BOW.

SINDRI (O.S.)
Two passes should do it.

Kratos reaches out, slowly running the dragon's tooth over the entire length of the bowstring.

SINDRI (O.S., CONT'D)
Gently, now!

As he does, LIGHTNING arcs from the tooth to the BOWSTRING, until the string itself is infused with crackling energy.

ATREUS
Whoa.

SINDRI (O.S.)
Oh, sure, *now* you're impressed.

Immediately following the bow upgrade—

SINDRI
Oh... how do I explain this? I've added a new vibrating pattern to the bowstring's fibers. Aiming it at that hardened world tree sap will vibrate its patterns to fracture point.

ATREUS
(confused)
What's... that mean?

SINDRI
It makes certain crystals go boom. Trust me, you'll love it.

Lingering further—

ATREUS
Where'd you learn how to do *that*, Sindri?

SINDRI
Well, after Brok and I parted ways, I undertook some study in Vanaheim. Truly mind-expanding. Now and then, I need new inspiration to grow creatively. Part of why we split up, my brother and I. He's stuck in his ways, so our work stagnated. Sure, we mastered weapon-making, but then what? Change is a part of life—if you can't adapt, and learn to thrive, you'll be left in the dust! And that's filthy.

ATREUS
Okay. Until next time...

SINDRI
Before you go—! See that you take special care near the peak. I'm pretty sure Odin is protecting something up there, and you don't wanna get on the Aesir's bad side.

ATREUS
(cheeky)
Who, us?

While exiting the dragon arena, back into the Mountain interior—

ATREUS
Feels like it wasn't that long ago we were hunting deer. Now we've fought dark elves, and trolls, and ogres, and a dragon! I feel like we can beat anything now.

KRATOS
We win because we are determined. Disciplined. Not because we feel ourselves superior.

ATREUS
Sure... I know... It's just... it feels good to be strong. You know?

KRATOS
...Yes. I know.

13. THE MAN IN THE TREE

INT/EXT. MOUNTAIN/ SUMMIT (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Crossing a dilapidated old bridge, WIND can be heard ahead. As they approach an area with wooden scaffolding—

ATREUS
It's getting colder—we must be near the top!

Kratos, with Atreus on his back, begins to climb.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
(softly)
Not long now, mom.

Kratos and son approach a narrow ridge leading to the peak's summit.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Look! The summit! We're so close now...

As they reach the top, Atreus vaults off Kratos' back and runs ahead and it becomes plainly obvious that something is wrong with his QUIVER. It's flapping around loosely and keeps falling off his shoulder.

KRATOS
Your quiver.

ATREUS
Strap broke when we fought the dragon. It's all right—I can hold it.

KRATOS
Stop.

Atreus stops running and Kratos walks up to him. Placing his hand on his son's shoulder, he drops to a knee and gets eye-level with the boy.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
(seriously)
A broken quiver will slow your draw. Pain we endure, faulty weaponry we do not.

Kratos quickly assesses the damage to Atreus' QUIVER. The STRAP has split at the center with the remaining attached fibers overstretching to cause a loose fit. He gathers the split ends tightly and holds them in place with one hand.

He reaches into the boy's quiver, pulls out a MISTLETOE ARROW, and jams it through the strap segments to rejoin them. He snaps off the arrowhead to serve as a splint, and discards the shaft.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
This will do for now. Good?

Atreus gives the strap a tug and rotates his shoulders forward, testing the fit.

ATREUS
Good.

KRATOS
(gesturing ahead)
Go.

As Kratos and Atreus climb to the top of the summit, they overhear a CONVERSATION echoing loudly.

Before the words become clear—

ATREUS
You hear those voices too, right?

KRATOS
Yes. Be silent...

One of the VOICES is recognizable as the stranger who came to their house—

STRANGER (O.S.)
You know why we're here. My last visit manage to loosen your tongue?

ATREUS
(hushed)
That sounds like the same man who came to our house. You said you killed him...

KRATOS
(hushed)
Sshhh.

Eavesdropping as they climb laterally around the summit, they catch glimpses that put names to faces. The Stranger is indeed the god BALDUR, and aiding him are two even more muscular and imposing figures, MAGNI and MODI. They are questioning one MIMIR, but their view of him is obscured by a TREE.

MIMIR (O.S.)
I see you brought company this time. Must be important if the Sons of Thor deign to grace me with their presence. Tell me... you two still tripping over yourselves to impress daddy?

BALDUR
The tattooed man. Tracks show he now travels with a child. Where would they go next?

MIMIR (O.S.)
Why would I know that?

MAGNI
You're the smartest man alive, aren't you?

MIMIR (O.S.)
Smarter than all the dead ones, too.

BALDUR
You help me, I help you. Tell me where they are and I'll talk to Odin—

MIMIR (O.S.)
Your father won't let me go, Baldur, and he won't let you kill me. You have nothing to offer me. So take your questions, take your threats, take these two worthless wankers, and *piss off.*

MODI
When no one's looking... we'll be back for your other eye.

MAGNI
Don't you forget... we're *everywhere*.

MODI
(to Magni)
We really are, aren't we?

BALDUR
Shut up, you idiots. Let's go.

Kratos and Atreus reach the top and turn the corner just in time to see Baldur, Magni, and Modi, walking down a path on the opposite side of the summit.

Nearby, there is a man, MIMIR, with his back to them, facing the henge. He appears to be encased up to his neck in CRYSTALLINE ROOTS. Only his head, and one arm, are exposed. He has two small horns and a MISSING EYE. The eye that remains is GLOWING.

Mimir is still CHUCKLING to himself when Kratos comes into view.

MIMIR
(surprised)
Ahhh... the very topic of conversation... a tattooed man traveling with a child.

KRATOS
Boy, check their path and make sure we are alone.

ATREUS
But... we just saw them leave.

KRATOS
Do as I say.

Mimir watches with interest as the confused boy takes off for ridge. When Atreus is out of earshot—

MIMIR
(intuiting, intrigued)
He doesn't know what you are...

KRATOS
And I would keep it that way. Who are you?

MIMIR
Me? I'm the greatest ambassador to the gods, the Giants, and all the creatures of the Nine Realms. I know every corner of these lands, every language spoken, every war waged, every deal struck. They call me... Mimir! Smartest man alive, and I have the answer to your every question.

KRATOS
Why does the son of Odin hunt us?

Mimir looks at him with a blank expression, and blinks, clearly stumped.

MIMIR
Okay, there are a few gaps in my knowledge. But Odin's had me imprisoned here for... 109 winters. I'm a clever lad, I can piece it together, I promise. Just...given time.

Atreus returns from the ridge.

ATREUS
(sighing with frustration)
Nobody there... just like I said.

KRATOS
The boy's mother is dead. She wished her—

ATREUS
She wanted us to spread her ashes on the highest peak in all the realms.

MIMIR
Oh, then you've come to the wrong place, little brother. The highest peak in all the realms is not here in Midgard. It's in Jötunheim, realm of the Giants.

Kratos and Atreus look around the wide open vista with a growing sense of defeat.

ATREUS
No...!

KRATOS
That could not be what she meant...

MIMIR
Take a look...

MIMIR'S EYE glows with GOLDEN LIGHT. Where the LIGHT hits the henge, we see a TALL WINDOW into another realm—golden and warm. In the distance, a craggy THREE-FINGERED PEAK rises majestically.

MIMIR (CONT'D)
This is the last known bridge to Jötunheim in all the realms. See that mountain, looks like a Giant's fingers scraping the sky? *That's* the highest peak in all the realms... Not here.

ATREUS
Can't we just take that bridge? We have a Bifröst.

MIMIR
When the Giants destroyed all other bridges to their realm, they locked this one up with a secret rune. If it still exists, only a Giant would know it.

ATREUS
And all of them left Midgard a long time ago...

MIMIR
True. But today the winds of fate have kicked up a strange vortex of coincidence. Fact is, there's only one person alive who can get you where you need to go ...and luckily for you, my schedule's wide open.

Thinking, Kratos looks at the POUCH OF ASHES on his belt, then at the henge. As he stares, the boy behind him looks uneasy, fearing his father is considering spreading the ashes right there and then. Atreus grabs his arm and catches his father's eye.

ATREUS
We're going to Jötunheim, right?

MIMIR
It's your best and only move from a tactical standpoint. It's the one place the man who cannot be killed won't follow you.

Kratos returns the pouch of ashes to his belt.

KRATOS
What do we do?

ATREUS
Yes!

MIMIR
First, you need to cut off my head.

ATREUS
Wait, what?

MIMIR
Odin made sure that no weapon, not even Thor's hammer, could free my body from these bonds. But fortunately, you don't need my body. The trick is, we need to find someone who can reanimate my head, using the old magic.

Atreus fruitlessly slices at the tree with his KNIFE, as if hoping to find some alternative to the direction of this conversation.

KRATOS
Old magic... there is a witch of the woods, she knows the old ways.

MIMIR
And she'll help? She might do. Worth a try!

KRATOS
But if she fails, you will be dead.

MIMIR
He tortures me, you know. Every day, brother. Odin himself sees to it personally, and believe me, there is no end to his creativity. Every. Single. Day. This... this isn't *living*.

KRATOS
Very well.

Kratos nods, and pulls out his axe. Atreus wanders away.

ATREUS
I can't watch this.

As Kratos raises the axe over his head, Mimir WHISPERS—

MIMIR
Brother, in case you can't resurrect me, there's something you need know. The boy...

Kratos growls softly at the uncomfortable topic.

MIMIR (CONT'D)
...the longer you wait to tell him his true nature, the more damage you do. He will resent you, and you may lose him forever.

KRATOS
There is much about me I would not have him know.

MIMIR
Aye... so you value your privacy more than your son?

KRATOS
I'm going to cut off your head now.

MIMIR
Fair enough.

Kratos lifts his axe. Atreus watches, but turns away just as Kratos slices the head with one swipe. Kratos attaches the DECAPITATED HEAD to his hip with ROPE, and they start the long walk back to the Witch of the Woods' house...

ATREUS
(excited, at a loss for words)
Jötunheim. We're going to Jötunheim. We're going to find the long-lost realm of the Giants. That's... that's –

KRATOS
Inconvenient.

ATREUS
Yeah... that's... just what I was going to say.

Very shortly after that —

KRATOS
Do you remember the way to the Witch's house?

ATREUS
Yes. The woods with the blood-red leaves, south of the lake. I know just where to go.
(after a moment)
Hope she made it back from Alfheim and can bring Mimir back. He seemed nice, before you cut off his head.

They use Brok's medallion on a MYSTIC ROCKPILE to open a door to the Realm Between Realms.

EXT. REALM BETWEEN REALMS

As they step into the Realm Between Realms to fast-travel to Brok's shop, Atreus marvels at the uncanny environment—an infinite tree, surrounded by unformed space, neither day nor night but a surreal grey.

ATREUS
Look at this place... this must be a branch of the World Tree!

The boy takes off, and lingers at the edge of a strange branch that tapers off so as to subtly resemble a diving board.

KRATOS
Boy! Stay on the path.

ATREUS
Right. Right, I know...

As they continue along the branches—

ATREUS
I can't believe it was Baldur that came to our house. The Aesir god, *Baldur*. And you fought him... and won!

KRATOS
Yes...

ATREUS
One of Odin's sons—Thor's brother. And now he's hunting us with his nephews? Why is this happening?

KRATOS
If we can raise the head, you can ask him.

ATREUS
Okay.
(changing subjects)
You know... it's silly, but I secretly hoped we'd find a Giant somewhere in that mountain. I guess they really did leave Midgard—except for the serpent. He may be the last of his kind.

Seems like he's done... when suddenly—

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Are you the last of your kind, too? Is that why you don't like to talk about—

KRATOS
My kind?

ATREUS
I mean... your family? Before mother and I. Where you came from... a mother? A father?

Kratos is rattled.

KRATOS
Now is not the time for that.

ATREUS
Yes, sir.

14. THE WITCH'S SECRET

INT. TÝR'S TEMPLE/BROK'S SHOP (MIDGARD) – DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Stepping out of the mystic gateway, they find BROK at his shop, roasting a SPIT OF MEAT over his FIRE PIT. He gnaws away at a BONE-IN CHUNK as Atreus runs up excitedly.

ATREUS
Brok! Brok...!!

Brok doesn't look up or give any response.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Brok!!!

BROK
(annoyed)
WHAT? I'm on a fuckin' break. You don't hear me screechin' at *you* whenever you're twiddling your short and curlies.

KRATOS
(scowling)
Leave him, boy.

Kratos turns to walk away, but Atreus lingers.

ATREUS
Saw your brother again!

BROK
Congratulations.
(to Kratos)
And I'm sure you let him go and roger my axe good and plenty again. Let's see the damage...

Kratos tosses him the LEVIATHAN. Brok flips the flat of the AXE HEAD over a few times, mumbling as he inspects it.

BROK (CONT'D)
(to himself)
Little canker-throat wouldn't know proper weight and balance if it were dangling off his chut.

Brok stands and walks over to a MAKE-SHIFT WORKBENCH nearby.

BROK (CONT'D)
He eating well enough?

ATREUS
I guess...

BROK
(under his breath)
Good.

Brok presents the "improved" axe.

BROK
'Times he gets so wrapped up in his work, Sindri hasn't the sense to sip or sup. And if he *does* remember, good luck getting him to cook his own meat. Guess I got all the stomach in the family, along with the smarts.

ATREUS
You miss him.

BROK
What? That spit-fister? Whatta *you* know...

ATREUS
I just mean—

BROK
Hey, do you mind? Trying to concentrate here. Already on a break from my break...

Now that Kratos' axe is improved they head back to the boat.

EXT. LAKE OF NINE (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

While in the Boat—

ATREUS
Got any more "short and purposeful" stories for me?

KRATOS
There was once a scorpion who wished to travel to the other side of a river. The scorpion asked a frog for help. He told the frog that if he gave him a ride across the river on his back, he would be rewarded. The frog protested, fearing the scorpion would sting him. The scorpion assured the frog that he would not sting him or they would both drown in the river. The Frog agreed, but halfway across the river, the scorpion stung him.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
The frog was mortally wounded and they both sunk to the bottom of the river and perished.

ATREUS
That's sad. Why would the scorpion do that?

KRATOS
He was a scorpion. It is his nature to do harm.

ATREUS
Oh... that's just what mom used to say about the gods.

KRATOS
Your mother always spoke the truth.
(a long pause as something hits close to home)
Enough stories.

EXT/INT. MYSTIC GROVE/WITCH'S CAVERN & HOUSE (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

As they take a lift up from the dock in the Witch's cavern—

ATREUS
I know she's really powerful, but you really think the witch can bring a head back to life?

KRATOS
She seems competent in her craft. And we have nothing to lose.

ATREUS
If she can't bring it back to life, can we keep the head?

KRATOS
No. But you may feed it to the fish.

ATREUS
Okay!

Kratos and Atreus enter the Witch's house. She stands on a LADDER, hanging HERBS from her garden to dry. The boy runs toward her.

ATREUS
Father—she *is* here!

When she sees Atreus, she climbs down to greet him.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
It is so good to see you again! I knew you weren't dead.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
(laughing)
Hello...!

She kneels and HUGS the boy warmly. He pulls away a moment later, as if afraid to forget why they came.

ATREUS
Oh—can you bring a head back to life?

WITCH OF THE WOODS
(nonplussed)
I'm... not sure I understand what...

Atreus can only smile at the absurdity of the question. But before he can explain, her eyes fall on the MISTLETOE ARROWS in the boy's quiver. Her tone suddenly shifts to one of HORROR.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
Wait... Where did you get those?

She stands, deadly serious, all color drained from her face.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
The arrows... Give them to me. NOW.

ATREUS
They were a gift...

KRATOS
Do as she says, boy.

Atreus reluctantly hands over the bundle of mistletoe arrows. The Witch of the Woods crosses to the BURNING FIREPLACE and throws the arrows into it.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
Those arrows are dangerous... wicked. You find any more, you destroy them. Understand?

Atreus stares at her, confused.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
DO YOU UNDERSTAND? SAY IT!

ATREUS
(freaked out)
I understand! If I see them, I'll destroy them!

WITCH OF THE WOODS
It's all I ask. Forgive me.
(regaining her composure)
Please—take my arrows in their place. I have no need for them anymore.

Atreus walks cautiously over to the WITCH'S QUIVER, hanging nearby. He glances back at her, making absolutely sure it's okay to take them. She gives a NOD.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
Now... what's this about a head?

Kratos pull's MIMIR'S HEAD from his bag and holds it up. The Witch of the Woods takes a step back, aghast.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
Do you have any idea who this is? Did you kill him?

KRATOS
At his request. He claimed you could revive him.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Me? Are you sure you heard him right?

ATREUS
Please...?

Atreus looks at her with pleading eyes. She SIGHS.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
Take him to the table.
(incantation voice)
Heimili!

The GIANT TURTLE lowers the house as the Witch of the Woods collects JARS OF INGREDIENTS from a shelf, and places them on the table.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
It's been a long time since I've practiced the Old magic. Hold him there—let's have a look.

After a quick examination—

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
Well, thankfully, his head hasn't decayed much and his brain is still intact. Nice, clean cut.

The Witch of the Woods slathers the neck wound with HERBS and SLUDGE.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
Cutting off *his* head of all people... I sure hope you know what you're doing.

She dumps GRUBS from a jar into Mimir's open mouth and pushes it closed. She gestures to a CAULDRON OF WATER near the fireplace.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
Now hold his head under the water and don't let go. I mean it.

Kratos submerges the head. The water begins to BUBBLE and FROTH. An AURORA BOREALIS EFFECT shimmers between the bubbles until the water calms.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
That's enough.

Satisfied, the Witch of the Woods gives Kratos a nod. He pulls out Mimir's head and holds it up to his face. It just hangs there, looking dead as ever.

Then suddenly... GLOWING RUNES shimmer across Mimir's skull. He blinks to life, COUGHING up a MOUTHFUL OF GRUBS.

ATREUS
It worked!

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Let me see him.

Kratos turns the head and holds it up to the Witch of the Woods' face.

WITCH OF THE WOODS (CONT'D)
Mimir... you there?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Yes...

WITCH OF THE WOODS
Good.

She SPITS in his face.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Oh...Hello, Freya. Been a long time! You look well.

WITCH OF THE WOODS
What I did, I did for them. As far as I'm concerned, death suits you better.

MIMIR'S HEAD
I'd bow if I could, your majesty. Forgive me—had I known the "witch in the woods" was Freya herself, I never would have suggested this.

ATREUS
(awe)
Freya? The goddess Freya?

MIMIR'S HEAD
(To Atreus)
You didn't know either?
(to Freya, sheepishly)
Sorry.

FREYA
(to Kratos)
When word gets out that Mimir is free, the wrath of Odin won't be far behind.

Kratos loops the head on his belt by the hair.

KRATOS
(betrayed)
You are a god...

FREYA
Leader of the Vanir once, yes... but no longer.

KRATOS
(mounting anger)
You did not think it important to tell me?

FREYA
Are *you* really going to lecture me about that?

Kratos eyeballs her for a moment, then—

KRATOS
We are leaving, boy.

ATREUS
But—

KRATOS
Now.

Atreus looks at Freya, then back to his father, and shuffles out.

Kratos gives Freya an ugly look as he follows his son...

FREYA
(shouting bitterly)
You're welcome!

...and EXITS.

As they walk away from Freya's house—

ATREUS
Why did you do that?

KRATOS
We cannot trust her.

ATREUS
Because she's a god?

KRATOS
Have I taught you nothing, boy?

ATREUS
But she's helped us a lot.

KRATOS
She lied.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Some people value their privacy. Best not to judge, brother.

KRATOS
When I require your counsel, head, I will ask.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Fair enough. Get me to Týr's temple, in the Lake of the Nine, and I'll get you to Jötunheim as promised.

ATREUS
We know the temple. What's there?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Only the last living Giant in Midgard. Who better to tell us the way?

ATREUS
The world serpent? Wait—do you know how to talk to him?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Indeed. He speaks an obscure tongue, more ancient even than these mountains. None are left in Midgard who speak it. Except, of course, for me.

ATREUS
You do?

MIMIR'S HEAD
It's true. You wouldn't know it to look at him, but Jörmungandr is a sparkling conversationalist.

15. THE TALKING HEAD

INT/EXT. LAKE OF NINE AND OTHER "LORE" ZONES (MIDGARD) - DAY

With Mimir in-party, various "Lore" conversations can occur while Boating or otherwise "on the road."

ATREUS
So, Mimir... why did Freya spit in your face?

KRATOS
No, speak of Baldur. He claims nothing harms him.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Aye, Baldur is blessed with invulnerability to all threats, physical or magical.

KRATOS
The boasting of a god. Everyone has a weakness.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Not him, I'm afraid. Baldur is blessed with invulnerability to all threats, physical or magical.

ATREUS
You just said that, Mimir.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Did I?

KRATOS
What is the source of this power?

MIMIR'S HEAD
(struggling, as if his brain were clouded by magic)
Well, as I recall... it involved... eh... a spell...?

ATREUS

Mimir?

MIMIR'S HEAD
(embarrassed)
Parts of m'brain must still be coming back to life. Just need a moment to finish waking up.

ATREUS
(quietly)
Hope he's not broken...

Later, after an encounter with a Hel-Walker—

MIMIR'S HEAD
I know I've been up on a mountain for a while now, but since when do the dead not stay dead? A little resurrection among friends is one thing—I can hardly complain... but it's as if Hel itself is shambling into Midgard.

ATREUS
Freya said the world was out of balance... that somebody meddled with forces.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Oh, that's plain to see. And Odin is the king of meddlers. But I shudder to think what he did to cause *this*... perhaps it involves the Valkyries. That'd be playing a dangerous game indeed...

Later, while on the road—

MIMIR'S HEAD
Why don't you tell me how all this began with Baldur?

ATREUS
He just knocked on our door!

MIMIR'S HEAD
Baldur of Asgard just knocked on your door?

ATREUS
Yeah, he just showed up and started a fight. He said he wanted to know something. He said "I know what you are"...

Kratos GRUNTS ambiguously. Mimir knows to steer away from the topic of godhood.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Oh! Well, we'll circle back to *that* later. What exactly did he want to know?

ATREUS
I was under the floor by then...

KRATOS
He said I already knew what he wanted. Perhaps he mistook me for another.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Hm. That's quite interesting.

Later, on the road—

ATREUS
So who were those two men with Baldur? Are they really sons of Thor?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Aye, Magni and Modi. Two bigger twits you won't likely find in the halls of Asgard. They'll do anything their uncle puts them up to.

KRATOS
They are fools?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Well, *dangerous* fools, to be sure. When they work together, they're formidable... but too often it's a petty competition. Terribly strong, even as children. I remember the time Hrungnir the brawler fell upon Thor—

KRATOS
Another time, head.

ATREUS

Aw!

Later, on the road—

ATREUS

So what do you think, Mimir? What does Baldur want with us?

MIMIR'S HEAD

Well... let's look at what we *know*. Baldur is Odin's finest tracker, bar none. If he wants you, you have to consider the possibility that *Odin* wants you. And as for what Odin wants, on this I have some expertise.

ATREUS

What could WE have that Odin doesn't? He's like the king of gods!

MIMIR'S HEAD

Of the Aesir, aye, but his reach is not unlimited. And where he cannot reach, he is preoccupied with going. He certainly tortured *me* enough about it over the years.

ATREUS

So Odin wants to go where he can't reach... are you saying he's trying to get to Jötunheim too?

MIMIR'S HEAD

Aye, it ranks among his foremost obsessions.

ATREUS

But... that doesn't make any sense, Mimir.

MIMIR'S HEAD

Oh? When did I stop making sense?

ATREUS

You're saying Baldur tracked us down to find the way to Jötunheim... but that was *before* we knew Jötunheim is where we needed to go! That's crazy.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Except for one thing... you *are* headed for Jötunheim. So he was right.

ATREUS
I'm so confused.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Well, then clearly you've been listening.

Later, on the road—

ATREUS
Okay—tell me again how Odin knew we were going to Jötunheim before we did.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Odin is extremely clever, you see. Nearly as clever as he thinks he is. And he's a collector of prophecies. If it's about the future, he adds it to his collection. Helps him style himself as all seeing and all knowing. But of course the idea is control. Control of the future, control of his fate... he'd control every realm of every land in every world if he could. Every potential pocket of resistance he seeks to eliminate. Even if you've never posed a threat before... he may think one day you might. So you see... it's not important how he knew before you did—it's important that he was *right*.

16. THE SERPENT'S TONGUE

EXT. TÝR'S BRIDGE/SERPENT'S HORN (MIDGARD) – DAY

As they arrive at Týr's Temple—

KRATOS
Head, how do we speak to the serpent?

MIMIR'S HEAD
There's a horn on a platform at the middle point of the bridge. Take me to it.

ATREUS
Finally! That horn!

Kratos and Atreus return to the GIANT HORN overlooking the lake. The WORLD SERPENT watches them from a distance.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Good. Now put my lips to the horn.

Kratos holds the lips of MIMIR'S HEAD to the GIANT HORN. It blows a sustained, DEEP MYSTICAL NOTE that echoes across the vast lake. Atreus watches in excited anticipation as the GIANT SNAKE rises from the water.

He begins to move toward them, but seems distracted by the LARGE STATUE OF THOR on the outer ring of the Lake. Before uttering a "word", he rears back, lets out a LOUD HISS and BITES DOWN on the statue, shearing it mid-calf.

ATREUS
Why's he doing *that?*

MIMIR'S HEAD
Odin had that statue made in honor of Thor. And seeing as the World Serpent absolutely abhors the fat dobber, he was probably sick of looking at it.

The World Serpent throws his head back and SWALLOWS.

ATREUS
But... doesn't that hurt?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Well, he and Thor have a bit of an unpleasant history between them... or they will, anyway. So I guess waking up to see it was worse than the thought of lumps of solid stone passing through his gullet. Want me to ask him?

KRATOS
No. Our only concern is Jötunheim.

The World Serpent turns his attention to Mimir. Once again, there emerges a DEEP HARMONIC VOICE—what sounds like simultaneous layers of low-end Mongolian throat singing and high-end African bushman "clicking" languages speaking the most ANCIENT TONGUE you've ever heard.

WORLD SERPENT
Ennnnndooooooooo. Thoooooo bloooooooo tooooooox...
(translation, do not subtitle)
You again. Have you come to sacrifice the axe?

Kratos pulls MIMIR'S HEAD hanging from his belt, and holds it up to the giant snake.

MIMIR'S HEAD
(to Kratos)
Wish me luck!

Mimir's Head CLEARS HIS THROAT and contorts his lips into a strange shape. The DEEP HARMONIC CHANT successfully emerges—a DEEP RUMBLE with concurrent TONGUE CLICKS.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Yooooooor-mooooooooo hin meeee-meeeeeeeeer.
(translation, do not subtitle)
Jörmungandr... it's me, Mimir.

The World Serpent leans in for a closer look.

WORLD SERPENT
Yaaaaw-ehhhhhhh-thaaaaa fooooooh-raaaaah-thooooo.
(translation, do not subtitle)
Yes.... But there used to be more of you.

MIMIR'S HEAD
(to Kratos, excitedly)
I've still got it, lads. He remembers me.
(to World Serpent)
Lyooooooooooo—
(interrupting himself)
Oh! That's not it! Eh...
(resuming harmonic chant)
Maaaaaw-lon-gooooo vih-nooooor koooooon tooooon.
(translation, do not subtitle)
Ah! That's a long story. My friends here search for entry to Jötunheim.

The World Serpent recoils suddenly, and bares his MONSTROUS FANGS.

MIMIR'S HEAD (CONT'D)
Ahh... Oh, dear. Eh...
(resuming harmonic chant)

MIMIR'S HEAD (CONT'D)
Ehhhhhh-kooooo... noooooh oh-thooooo voo-nooooor...
(translation, do not subtitle)
No, no! They are no friends of Odin—quite the opposite.
They seek only to pay final respects to the boy's mother.

The World Serpent inspects Atreus and Kratos.

WORLD SERPENT
Mooooon-veeeee-taaaaah. Thaaaaaw-toooool Teeeeer.
(translation, do not subtitle)
Ahh. That pain I understand. First, they need a sliver from the tip of the sacred chisel. They must also learn the Black Rune... secreted away in the Temple of Týr.

MIMIR'S HEAD
(to Kratos)
He knows the pain of your loss. He will help you.

WORLD SERPENT
Baaaaaw-thooooor-thaaaaah... gooouul-dooooo...
(translation, do not subtitle)
Return with both. Another step awaits. And Mimir? Something familiar about the boy. Do I know him?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Efni... ooooo-fooooon-goooor.
(translation, do not subtitle)
No... that should not be the case.
(to himself)
Curious...

KRATOS
What is it?

MIMIR'S HEAD
(dismissive)
Ohhh... nothing to be concerned about.

The World Serpent suddenly puts his massive head against the TEMPLE BRIDGE. With his colossal strength, he pushes the bridge—with Kratos and Atreus still on it—in a different direction.

ATREUS
What is he doing?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Making sure we're heading in the right direction.

As the bridge continues rotating, pushed along by the snake—

MIMIR'S HEAD
Listen closely now... we need two things to get us into the land of the Giants. First, we need to learn the travel rune that opens realm travel to Jötunheim. Second, we need to carve that rune into the special gateway.

ATREUS
That one on the peak where we first met you?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Correct. Except the Giants, in their infinite wisdom, saw to it that no ordinary chisel would do the job. Only the tip of a *magical* chisel opens that gate. Luckily, I know where it is and it's not far.

ATREUS
He looked kinda mad for a moment there.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Ah. That. He thought I said you were *friends* of Odin. You'll forgive me—I've never spoken the Ancient Tongue sober.

The bridge finishes rotating and locks into position. We can now see a new vista across the lake—

ATREUS
Wait, look! The water's dropped even further! You can see more of the realm towers and statues. I even see new places to explore along the shore.

KRATOS
Where is this chisel?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Find me a boat and we'll go from there.

Later, on the road—

ATREUS
Mimir... what else did the serpent tell you, when you spoke? Kinda sounded important.

MIMIR'S HEAD
I'm sure it's nothing. He just said the boy seemed familiar to him.

ATREUS
Me? That's impossible.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Oh, I quite agree. Unless... perhaps...he refers to something yet to be? It is said that when Jörmungandr and Thor battle at Ragnarök, their clash so violently shakes the Tree of Life that it splinters, casting the Serpent backward through time, even before his own birth.

ATREUS
What!

KRATOS
That is madness.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Well, I did say not to concern yourself...

17. THE STONEMASON'S CHISEL

EXT. LAKE OF NINE/THE MASON'S CHANNEL (MIDGARD) - DAY

At Mimir's direction, Kratos rows the boat through a gate into a SUBTERRANEAN PASSAGEWAY—

KRATOS
This chisel we seek—what is it?

MIMIR'S HEAD
I'm glad you asked actually. I have just the story for you...
(clears his throat)
There was a Giant once named Thamur—a very *giant* Giant—who, despite his mountainous size, was without

MIMIR'S HEAD (CONT'D)
question the greatest stonemason this world had ever seen. Proud Thamur hoped to one day pass his vast knowledge on to his son, but a quarrel of theirs spiraled out of control, and the overworked stonemason—*bonk!*—struck his son. Hrimthur ran off into the night. Feeling shame and regret, Thamur chased after his son. Sadly, he caught the eye of the one person he didn't want to meet alone at night, so far from home... Thor.

ATREUS
And?!? What happened next?

MIMIR'S HEAD
You'll see.

The water around the boat has grown noticeably icier since Mimir began his story. As it emerges from a tunnel, Atreus turns around in the boat to take in the snowy, mountainous vista. Only when an incongruous GIANT HAMMER comes into view does it become clear that many of the mountains are in fact parts of the GIANT FROZEN CORPSE OF THAMUR THE STONEMASON.

ATREUS
(in awe)
Thor killed him.

Then the boy notices the structure lying underneath the giant's palm.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Oh, no... he fell on a village?

MIMIR'S HEAD
(sadly)
Aye. When Thamur fell, he crushed a charming place famed for worshipping the Vanir god, Njörd. Thor always took credit for planning that one, but the truth is the sweaty bawbag just got lucky.

Atreus approaches and reads RUNE GRAFFITI scrawled on a stone.

ATREUS
(reading runes)
"To Njörd we offer back the sea's bounty."

MIMIR'S HEAD
Ah, yes. It was believed that Njörd calmed the winds and seas for the fishermen. For that, they loved and worshipped him here.

EXT/INT. NJÖRDHOLM/DOCKS BY THE FROZEN LAKE (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

As they climb down a rope into a partially collapsed building under the giant's palm—

ATREUS
What happened to the survivors?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Oh... Thamur was a Frost Giant. When he died, his final breath froze *everything*.

They climb up a rope nearby and crest the edge of the main section of the frozen lake. In the distance, the GIANT HEAD of Thamur's Corpse looms large. Buried in the head of the fallen Giant, we see a CHISEL through his skull, buried deep into the ice beneath him.

ATREUS
(half-whispers to himself in awe)
There he is...

MIMIR'S HEAD
Find the tip of that chisel. That's the magic we need.

They approach the GIANT'S CHISEL. Its MAGICAL TIP can be seen below them through tons of SOLID ICE. Atreus crouches down to get a better look.

ATREUS
How we getting down there?

Kratos surveys the area. His eyes land on something high-up.

KRATOS
I have a plan.

MIMIR'S HEAD
You do?

KRATOS
Do not act so surprised.

MIMIR'S HEAD
No offense, brother, but I don't even think Thor with Mjölnir in hand could get through that much ice.

KRATOS
Then Thor is a fool.

MIMIR'S HEAD
This should be entertaining...

The WAIL of Draugr ring out as they're attacked. After the fight, they hear a voice from a nearby ridge—

SINDRI
Oh, hey. You again! Come on up!

ATREUS
(surprised)
Sindri?

Sindri drops a rope down from the ridge, and Kratos & Atreus climb up.

SINDRI (CONT'D)
That was... uh... something, that fight. Here, catch!

He tosses an APPLE from his KNAPSACK to Kratos, who casually bisects it in midair with his axe—each half flying past opposite sides of his head.

SINDRI (CONT'D)
Well that was a waste of a perfectly good ap—

KRATOS
How were you not seen? There is nowhere here to hide.

SINDRI
Oh. That. It's a little trick my people can pull... a special way of not being seen.

ATREUS
(fascinated)
You can be invisible?

Sindri disappears behind a NATURAL FORMATION in the ice, but does not emerge from the other side. The CAMERA, however, continues to follow a seemingly invisible Sindri across the scene.

SINDRI (O.S.)
More like I can step into the realm between realms... and your mind doesn't understand what it's seeing, so it sees nothing at all. That's how we avoid ever having to actually use the weapons we craft.

Sindri steps into frame right next to Atreus, and hands him an APPLE.

SINDRI (CONT'D)
It, uh... It doesn't seem to work on dragons though.

The boy rubs the apple on his tunic—

ATREUS
Your brother wanted to know if you were getting enough to eat. I guess I can tell him you are!

—and takes a BIG BITE.

SINDRI
(shocked)
Brok was asking about me? Was there mead on his breath?

Suddenly, the LEVIATHAN AXE strikes the STONE WALL next to Sindri—thrown by an impatient Kratos. It sticks out of a stone, stopping Sindri in his tracks. He leans in, gives the axe a close look, then shoots Kratos a DEATH STARE.

SINDRI (CONT'D)
You let him touch this again.
(to axe)
Come on then...

Sindri struggles a little with the axe before pulling it from the wall, and then leads them to his CAMP. On the way there—

ATREUS
(to Kratos)
So *that's* how Brok was in the temple right after the water dropped. He stepped between realms!

Sindri places the axe down on his workbench.

SINDRI
Okay, now shush! I need complete silence for this...

Sindri takes his HAMMER from his belt and gingerly strikes the handle of the axe—TING!

SINDRI (CONT'D)
There ya go!

Kratos grabs the axe from the bench, gives it a look, and then shakes his head.

KRATOS
("idiot")
Rrrrn.

Leaving Sindri, they work their way through the ruined buildings of the village of Njördholm—

ATREUS
Mimir. You knew this place? Before?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Aye, came here on a diplomatic mission once, trying to broker a peace between Asgard and Vanaheim. That war—so many lives lost. What I didn't know was Thor had already gone on a killing spree of Giants.

ATREUS
What did the Giants have to do with the war between the gods?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Nothing at all, lad, that's the tragedy of it. They took no side in that madness... but Odin's paranoia is surpassed only by Thor's lust for blood.

Kratos and the boy climb up to to a platform underneath the dead Stonemason's GIANT HAMMER. Hanging down from it is a large RIBBON which ends in a GOLD MEDALLION with another VIBRATE CRYSTAL at its center. At Kratos's urging, Atreus fires a SHOCK ARROW into the crystal, blowing it up and causing the hammer to partially break free of the ice anchoring it. It shifts and falls—but not far enough, listing to one side and lodging itself against a high wall.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Well! A stealthy plan it is not.

KRATOS
Now we must free the other strap.

ATREUS
(confused)
We do?

Kratos jumps to the dangling strap of the GIANT HAMMER and begins to climb, carrying Atreus on his back.

ATREUS
Why are we going up when what we need is all the way down there?

KRATOS
Think.

ATREUS
Well... the chisel tip is under thick layers of ice, so melting it won't work.

KRATOS
Correct.

ATREUS
And there weren't any Shatter Crystals nearby for me to shoot, so that's not an option.

KRATOS
Correct.

ATREUS
That just leaves smashing the ice. But we'd need something ridiculously heavy to—Ohhhhh. I get it now.

KRATOS
Good.

Continuing their ascent, they get a clear view of the ice far below until they reach a platform with access to the head of the STONEMASON'S HAMMER.

ATREUS
Well there it is. How are we going to get it free?

KRATOS
A push.

ATREUS
But—

KRATOS
Trust me.

EXT. STONE MASON'S HAMMER—STONE MASON'S CORPSE—MIDGARD—MORNING

Stepping toward the hammer head, Kratos pauses—

KRATOS
Ready? Dig in and push with everything.

The boy sounds pleased at being invited to help.

ATREUS
Yes, sir.

Kratos pushes on the GIANT HAMMER and the boy joins in. Finally, it breaks free.

ATREUS
How do we get back down?

KRATOS
We jump!

ATREUS
Really?

KRATOS
Come!

Kratos grabs the boy and jumps onto the hammer as it falls forward. They land against the side, grabbing on. They lay flat on the hammer, riding it down as it falls .

KRATOS
Do not panic!

ATREUS
Why would I panic?!

The boy loses his grip—

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Whoa!!

—but is quickly saved by his father.

KRATOS
I have you!

There's a BOOMING EXPLOSION of stone and ice. They end up in a small pocket underneath of dome of ice debris.

Kratos covers the boy with his own body as some chunks fall from the ceiling.

MIMIR'S HEAD
You're cracked, you know that?

KRATOS
(amused, dismissive)
Hhng.
(to Atreus)
You are well?

ATREUS
Uh-huh.

KRATOS
We should keep moving.

Once the dust settles, Kratos looks at his handiwork with a tinge of pride—

ATREUS
The chisel tip!

MIMIR'S HEAD
Give the man credit. He has a talent for destroying things.

KRATOS
Remember that, head.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Never leaves my mind...

18. THE SONS OF THOR

EXT/INT. NJÖRDHOLM/OUTSKIRTS OF THE CREVASSE (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Kratos and Atreus jump across to a handhold in the ice and begin climbing around the old, frozen city structures. Shortly after beginning to move to the left, a loud THUNDERCLAP causes a giant ice chunk ahead to calve off, reshaping their path—

MAGNI (O.S)
Where are they?!

MODI (O.S)
Ugh. I fucking hate Midgard. How do we know they're even here?

MAGNI (O.S)
Because that hammer didn't fall on its own.

MODI (O.S)
Well... If we find them, I get the kid, right?

MAGNI (O.S)
What is the matter with you?
(inhaling)
I smell a dwarf. Find him.

His voice trails off as they move away...

ATREUS
(whispers)
Father—

KRATOS
(whispers)
Not now.

They reach the end of the climb and jump to a small outcropping.

ATREUS
Those were the guys we saw with Baldur. His nephews?

MIMIR
Aye. Magni and Modi—The Sons of Thor.

ATREUS
Mother always said the Aesir were the worst of the gods, and Thor was the worst of the Aesir. Guess he's a terrible father, too.

KRATOS
They are no longer children. They have no excuse.

ATREUS
Will Sindri be okay?

MIMIR
(reassuring)
They'll never even see him.

Kratos and Atreus enter a room with a large dining table. Mimir recognizes the area and begins to reminisce.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Ah, the great dining hall. Envy of all Midgard. Funny, I remember there being a massive candelabrum. Really livened up the place...

Kratos looks up and spots the candelabrum, frozen, suspended in a nearby ice wall—

KRATOS
There.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Ah yes.

Kratos shoots the VIBRATE CRYSTAL, causing the candelabrum to swing down and smash the table and chairs—

MIMIR'S HEAD (CONT'D)
You just can't help but break things, can you?

Shooting the crystal additional times will make the candelabrum swing and lodge in a new location. After a couple of repetitions, the explosion reveals a 2nd floor... and drops the vibrate crystal to the ground, cracking it enough to let Kratos pull throwable chunks off of it.

MIMIR'S HEAD (CONT'D)
If memory serves, the jarl's throne was just on the other side of that wall of ice.

After the player shatters the left ice wall, a bunch of enemies will attack. After dispatching them—

ATREUS
I think we can get through there!

Kratos and Atreus make their way out of the Dining Hall.

KRATOS
Shh—something ahead...

Turning a corner, they see Sindri with his makeshift shop again...

MIMIR
See, lad? He's fine.

SINDRI
Thought it best to vanish when Thor's idiot sons showed up.

KRATOS
Those men. What do you know of them?

SINDRI
First, they're not men. They're *gods*. Well—demi-gods anyway. Let's see... Thor's their dad. Different moms—sordid story, that one. Baldur's their uncle, Odin, dear ol' Grandpa. Oh, and a sister named—

KRATOS
(annoyed)
Weapons. How do they fight?

SINDRI
Oh. Of course. Magni's strong—*really* strong. Carries a huge sword hardened by cyclonic thunder. And Modi? Ecch. I'd sooner lick a rat than shake that dung heap's hand. His mace and shield's just a cheap knockoff of my elegant work on their dad's hammer. Best to follow my lead and avoid.

As they depart Sindri's shop, they hear some familiar voices ECHOING off the crevasse walls.

MAGNI (O.S.)
Will you focus on your damn job and quit that shit.

MODI (O.S.)
You quit that shit.

MAGNI (O.S.)
I mean it! He went to war with Uncle and *walked away.*

MODI (O.S.)
Maybe. Uncle hasn't seen straight in years.

MAGNI (O.S.)
Well, as long as father believes him, so do we. So you will stop talking, focus, and help me find them.

MODI (O.S.)
(sarcastic)
Can't disappoint father!

MAGNI (O.S.)
Oh, I'll smack you boy. No, we cannot disappoint father. Now keep looking!

Kratos and Atreus jump down into the ruins of a domed rotunda, the SOUNDS OF FIGHTING still echoing off the crevasse walls around and above them.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Hurry, brother. We may get a piece of the chisel and be gone before they even notice.

As they move toward the GIANT CHISEL TIP, a MASSIVE OGRE drops from above into their path with a THUD. Riding him down is MAGNI, covered in the creature's blood and wearing a broad smile.

MIMIR'S HEAD (CONT'D)
Uh oh.

MAGNI wrenches the ogre's neck with a sickening CRACK. He stands, eyes fixed on Kratos while the smile fades from his lips.

MAGNI
You.

Magni HOISTS the LIMP BODY of the ogre over his head and HEAVES it aside.

KRATOS
(calmly)
Boy—

Kratos motions for Atreus to get behind him, which he does.

MAGNI
Surrender. The Allfather demands it.

KRATOS
No.

MAGNI
(smiles)
Good.

Magni draws his SWORD.

KRATOS
(to Atreus)
This fight is mine, boy. GO.

Atreus tries to flee, but MODI drops in from above, cutting him off.

MODI
And where do you think you're goin'?

Atreus draws his bow and points it at Modi.

MODI (CONT'D)
(mockingly)
Oh no. Brother! The little freak's got a bow! What are we gonna do?

He chuckles as he moves to stand next to his brother.

BOSS FIGHT BEGINS.

When player "wins"—

Magni brings his sword down on Kratos' shield, pinning him in place for the moment.

MODI
(chuckling, to Atreus)
Wow, kid... your mother must have been some whore
to lay with the likes of him.

Something snaps in the boy, and he charges out of the center of the fog at Modi with his HUNTING KNIFE, snarling like an animal.

ATREUS
I'll KILL you!

KRATOS
ATREUS! Control yourself!

Kratos summons his might and shoves Magni back with his shield, following up with several increasingly mortal-looking Axe strikes. Finally, he brings the Axe down through the MIDDLE OF MAGNI'S FACE.

MODI
(horrified panic)
Magni! NO—!!
(to Kratos)
How did you..? You have no idea what...
(disbelief turns to anger)
You son of a bitch!

As Kratos steps toward him, Modi's courage quickly abandons him and he flees the scene.

ATREUS
You're next!

Atreus fires ARROWS at him wildly as Kratos gives chase.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Come back, you damn coward! I'll rip your head off!!

The boy suddenly doubles over and falls to his knees.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
GAAAH!!

He erupts into a COUGHING FIT—like the one after fighting the troll in the woods near his home, and after his tantrum in Alfheim—a DEEP, WET COUGH.

Kratos stops and turns to see Atreus fall. He turns back to Modi and watches with frustration as MODI ESCAPES the scene.

He rushes back to the boy as he continues to COUGH violently into his HAND... the worst we've heard.

KRATOS
The sickness... the fever has returned.

ATREUS
(weakly)
No! It hasn't...

Kratos grabs Atreus' hand and turns it over, revealing SPLATTERS OF BLOOD.

KRATOS
(frustrated)
Boy...

MIMIR'S HEAD
The coughing... the blood... The boy's sick. He needs help.

ATREUS
NO.

He controls the coughing, and staggers to his feet like a newborn deer...

KRATOS
Steady...

...taking a few weak steps toward the STONEMASON'S CHISEL, growing steadier with each step.

ATREUS
I'll be alright...

MIMIR'S HEAD
There you go, lad...

Kratos tries to help him but Atreus shrugs him off.

ATREUS
I'm fine. See?

Kratos unsheathes the LEVIATHAN AXE and turns toward the chisel.

MIMIR'S HEAD
We should keep an eye on him.

Kratos uses his axe to CHIP OFF a manageable shard from the tip of the Stonemason's Chisel.

KRATOS
Enough?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Should do. With that, we can carve the travel rune to Jötunheim—get you where you need to go. Incidentally, all those magically-sealed doors we've seen can now be unlocked... like that one around the corner. You can get through that door there, now that you got the chisel.

As they climb up the side of the dead Giant's SHOULDERPAD STUDS—

ATREUS
You... killed Magni.

MIMIR'S HEAD
That he did.

ATREUS
He was a god... but you killed him.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Minor Aesir, perhaps, but aye...

ATREUS
And his father is Thor...

MIMIR'S HEAD
Not Minor. Not Minor at all, him. This will not go over well in Asgard.

KRATOS
I defended us. Nothing more. I fear no judgment.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Judgment, no, but if vengeance is any concern...

ATREUS
(after a moment, quietly)
Since when can you kill a god...?

Atreus can't shake his THROATY COUGH as they continue their egress.

MIMIR'S HEAD
I don't think the lad's doing too well.

ATREUS
(between coughs)
I'm fine... Nothing to worry about.

KRATOS
(slightly unconvinced)
If so, then keep up.

ATREUS
Yes sir.

As they walk, listening to the boy's heavy breathing—

ATREUS
Hey... I just realized... Magni didn't come back to life.

MIMIR'S HEAD
That *is* interesting. It's known the Aesir find their own way to Valhalla. No Valkyrie escort, no processing at the gates of Helheim. That may be significant...

They wind their way out of the village, mostly in silence (except for occasional COUGHING), finding themselves ultimately under the STONEMASON'S PALM again.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Back under his palm. We're almost there.

They approach the docked boat where the adventure started.

ATREUS
Everything we just did... climbed around a dead giant, rode a giant falling hammer, fought some bad gods. What do you think mother would say?

KRATOS
That you have come a long way.

ATREUS
(bittersweetly)
Thanks.

As soon as they get back into the boat—

MIMIR'S HEAD
What now then? Maybe Freya ought to have a look at the boy.

ATREUS
No, I feel better now. I just needed to catch my breath. Where do we go next?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Well, now that we've got the Giant's chisel, we need to learn the travel rune to Jötunheim so we can carve it into that special gateway atop the peak, and open realm travel to the land of the Giants.

ATREUS
You don't know it?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Alas, no—but the Serpent did mention that the Giants had entrusted that secret to Týr.

ATREUS
Isn't Týr dead?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Aye, but his hidden vault is very much in reach. The doors are beneath his temple, submerged in the lake for generations until our snake-friend shifted his weight. There we shall find the fabled "Black Rune of Jötunheim"...

19. THE TIME BEFORE

INT/EXT. LAKE OF NINE AND OTHER "LORE" ZONES (MIDGARD) - DAY

Before heading to Týr's Temple, they decide to explore a bit more of the Lake of Nine—

ATREUS
Mimir, you never did tell me why Freya spit in your face.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Well, she blames me in large measure for her present circumstances... and not totally without reason. It all goes back to the Long War between the Aesir and Vanir. Prior to that, wars for the Aesir were easily won—but the Vanir had proved their equal, and exacted devastating damage. Both sides suffered tremendous losses... and for many of us, quite frankly, war was simply no fun anymore, but a rather senseless waste of precious life. Wouldn't you agree, brother?

Kratos GRUNTS, non-committally.

MIMIR'S HEAD (CONT'D)
Precisely. Enough was enough—and at last, Odin's most brilliant advisor became determined to find a more enlightened path. He set about to broker a peace between the Gods. It took some convincing, but ultimately Odin was persuaded to marry his deadliest enemy—a certain Vanir goddess, legendary not only for her fertile beauty but her genius at the very Vanir magic that Odin had long aspired to master.

ATREUS
Freya married *Odin*? What was in it for her?

MIMIR'S HEAD
It was a sacrifice to protect her people—a selfless act of love. Truly, she deserves better than she got. But of course there's more to *that* story.

Later—

ATREUS
I can't believe Odin and Freya were ever married.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Love and hate are more closely intertwined than you might imagine. For instance, Odin hates the Giants, and they him, but Thor's own mother was the Giantess Fjörgyn—one of Odin's great loves.

ATREUS
So Thor is half-god and half-Giant? Weird...!

MIMIR'S HEAD
Once Fjörgyn was gone, lonely ages passed for Odin... and as war with the Vanir raged, I could see what he really wanted beneath his bluster. And after no small amount of convincing, Freya agreed. For a while there, he really turned on the charm. He seemed happy. He seemed interested in making *her* happy. He granted her so many wishes I can scarcely recall them all. The peace held, and I truly believed all had worked out better than I could have planned. But Odin's true face showed itself again in the end. Oh, he won Freya's trust, and she taught him some of her Vanir magic—another choice she would live to bitterly regret. Sadly, despite his wise counselor's best efforts to persuade him that peace was the only true path to stave off Ragnarök, Odin never let go of his obsession with Jötunheim. The taste of Vanir magic led him to new forms of experimentation, and new levels of depravity.

Later still—

ATREUS
Okay, obviously the marriage with Odin didn't last. But how did Freya end up a hermit in the woods?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Oh, that was a singular piece of cruelty, even for Odin. As if the marriage wasn't punishment enough! Freya was better to him than he deserved. She stuck it out through all manner of indignity, all in the name of maintaining peace, and safety for her people. But Odin's madness, his tyranny, his corruption of her magicks—it became more than she could stomach, and at long last she broke it off. Odin's wrath was fierce, and his curses upon her were more than she'd dared to fear.

ATREUS
But her magic was so much stronger than his...

MIMIR'S HEAD
After so much time together, he knew her vulnerabilities, and exploited them to craft curses she could never break.

ATREUS
Oh... like not being able to leave Midgard.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Worse still, he robbed her of her warrior spirit. Freya cannot fight—even to defend herself. No living thing may she harm, by blade nor spell. In a world this belligerent, what choice does she have but isolation?

ATREUS
Poor Freya... I guess if I was her, I'd spit in your face too.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Aye, lad. So would I.

Later, while on the road—

ATREUS
Mimir... do you know why there are no more Giants left in Midgard? I mean, not counting the serpent from the future.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Well, they did not take me into their confidence about that, Odin's convictions to the contrary. But I know this—if I'd spent the better part of sixty winters seeing my best and brightest cut down by Thor and that damn hammer, I might very well go home to lick my wounds.
(beat)
It's too bad. I was fond of every Giant I ever met...

ATREUS
So that's why they destroyed the bridges to Jötunheim... so the Aesir couldn't follow? And is that why there's no tower in the lake?

MIMIR'S HEAD
I doubt it's a coincidence.

ATREUS
So you think when we get to Jötunheim, we might find Giants there?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Anything's possible.

Later, while on the road—

ATREUS
Why's Odin so desperate to find a way into Jötunheim, anyway?

MIMIR'S HEAD
He's convinced the Giants hold the key to changing his fate when Ragnarök comes. They are the Aesir's oldest enemies, after all—and it's their army that's supposed to do him in, in the end. But more than that, he covets their gifts of prophecy. He wants to know what they know, and see what they see. So much suffering could have been avoided if his insatiable curiosity was not so much stronger than his wisdom.

Later, while on the road—

ATREUS
Here's something I can't figure out... Odin wants to prevent Ragnarök... but the Serpent's already been there and seen it. So hasn't he already failed?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Fate's a tricky thing, lad. And Odin's just arrogant enough to think he can get the best of it.

KRATOS
Fate is another lie told by the gods. Nothing is written that cannot be unwritten.

MIMIR'S HEAD
On that, brother, you and the Allfather may just agree. Even if he can't prevent Ragnarök, he still hopes to learn enough details to influence the outcome.

EXT/INT. TÝR'S TEMPLE/TÝR'S VAULT (MIDGARD) – DAY

They discover a magically sealed "CHISEL DOOR" around the side of the temple. Kratos uses the shard of Thamur's Chisel to gain entry. Stepping through the massive doors, Kratos and Atreus ascend a staircase that spills into a beautiful chamber of onyx and wood. There, Atreus spots a familiar sight nestled in a gold-rimmed alcove—a SACRED TRIPTYCH OF THE GIANTS.

ATREUS
Another one of these. It's Týr! But... the middle panel is missing. Wait, I thought Týr was a god, not a giant.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Aye. But he was loved by everyone, including the giants. Other than me, he was the only one they gifted with their special sight. Hey... I wonder if the giants left a triptych about me somewhere too?

In the center of the chamber of onyx and wood, there sits a SAND BOWL.

KRATOS
Go ahead.

ATREUS
Actually... come look. Let me show you how to read this.

KRATOS
That is not necess—

ATREUS
You've taught me so much. Let me teach *you* something.

Kratos drops to a knee next to his son to look at the RUNES carved into the bowl's pedestal. He is appreciative of the boy's willingness to teach, but the timing of this lesson is inconvenient.

KRATOS
Atreus...

ATREUS
Come on. You already speak it. Learning to read won't be *that* hard.

KRATOS
I know how to read, boy. Just not this tongue.

ATREUS
You're halfway there already then. Okay... so the runes represent a lot of different things. Some gods, some animals, and some are—

Kratos holds up his hand.

KRATOS
Wait.

ATREUS
Am I going too fast? Sorry I'll—

KRATOS
Not that. Do you smell something?

Atreus takes a couple SHORT SNIFFS as Kratos stands.

ATREUS
(puzzled)
[sniffing] Yeah, I do. Smells like—rain?

CRACK! A bolt of LIGHTNING strikes the sand bowl in front of them, ELECTRICITY arcing out in all directions. Kratos and Atreus fly backward in from the concussion, crashing to the ground with a THUD.

As the fog clears from Kratos' mind, he looks up to see MODI walking toward him. Atreus lays on the floor several meters away. Kratos tries to stand, but Modi raises his MACE and sends a MASSIVE DISCHARGE of LIGHTING to put him back down.

MODI
You ruined everything. I *earned* that fucking hammer, but now everyone's gonna think I only got it 'cause Magni's gone. I'll be a joke. But if I kill *you*—

Modi shoots more LIGHTNING at Kratos, who roars in PAIN.

MODI (CONT'D)
—no one's gonna laugh at me.

Modi continues to electrocute Kratos as he lies on the floor, unable to get up.

ATREUS
No!

Kratos struggles against the relentless lightning strikes from Modi's mace. Through the pain, Kratos sees Atreus rise to his feet and draw his bow.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Þruma—!!

Atreus fires a SHOCK ARROW at Modi, who swiftly blocks it with his SHIELD. It ABSORBS the electricity, powering the shield up further and re-directing the LIGHTNING through the mace and back at Kratos on the ground. Kratos howls thru gritted teeth, angry at the pain.

Atreus touches his father's shoulder, and is rebuffed when shockwaves ripple up his arm.

MODI
(To Atreus)
Wow, are you dumb. That your father's doing or did you get it from your mom? She stupid *and* ugly?

ATREUS
Shut up!

Atreus slings his bow over his shoulder and unsheathes his HUNTING KNIFE. He charges at Modi, who casually SWATS the boy aside with his electrically-charged shield. Atreus is LAUNCHED backward and CRASHES to the floor. As he STANDS, gingerly—

ATREUS
(catching his breath)
You don't... know anything... about my mother.

MODI
Oh, that's true. But I'm gonna get to know *you* really well. You're gonna be my new brother... right after I finish killing your father.

Modi sends another SURGE OF LIGHTNING into Kratos.

ATREUS
(losing control)
STOP IT!

Atreus sheathes his knife—rage boiling inside him. He lets it loose as he's seen his father do, countless times.

Cue ATREUS RAGE MODE!

ATREUS (CONT'D)
RAAAAAAAA—!!!

But unlike his father, Atreus' mind can't take the strain of the surging Rage energy, and he suddenly CRUMPLES to the ground, losing consciousness.

MODI
(laughing)
Whoops... I think I broke him.

The player's RAGE METER immediately hits full and begins to flash. When Rage is triggered—

KRATOS
RAAAAAAAA!!!

Kratos flies into a rage, forcing himself to STAND through Modi's ELECTRICAL ONSLAUGHT.

Every step is agony, yet with each step, Kratos' pace quickens.

MODI
(beginning to panic)
Stay back!

Modi swings his MACE at Kratos as he approaches, but Kratos CATCHES it by the handle. In one quick move, Kratos RIPS the mace from Modi's hand and SLAMS it down on his SHIELD, knocking it away from the terrified god.

Kratos SLAMS the mace to the ground and RAGE-PUNCHES Modi in the gut, knocking him across the room into a column. Kratos ROARS with fury.

MODI (CONT'D)
(almost in tears)
No...

Modi struggles to get back on his feet, doubled over in pain.

MODI (CONT'D)
This isn't over!

Modi quickly staggers down the hallway and out the EXIT DOOR.

The camera finds Atreus, lying unconscious nearby.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Brother... the boy.

Kratos walks over to his son—the stillness of his body is unnerving. He bends down and gently cradles the boy in his arms.

KRATOS
Atreus...

MIMIR'S HEAD
You have to get him to Freya, quickly. There's no other way.

He lifts the boy as he stands and turns to leave the chamber. Outside, they approach a DOCKED BOAT—

MIMIR'S HEAD
Take the boat. Freya's isn't far.

Kratos carefully lays Atreus in the well of the boat, his head resting on his usual seat.

EXT. MYSTIC GROVE/WITCH'S CAVERN (MIDGARD) - DUSK (CONTINUOUS)

As they row into the darkness of the underground river leading to Freya's—

MIMIR'S HEAD
Odin's eye is on you, brother. Especially now that you've taken to killing his kin. Freya's forest is a blind spot for him. This is our smartest move. And if anyone can heal him, it's her.

KRATOS
What is happening to him?

MIMIR'S HEAD
I've seen it in mortals, that some conflict of the mind expresses itself as an ailment of the body. Never in a God, but... a God *believing* himself mortal? I can only imagine...

(comforting himself)
We're almost there.

Kratos docks the boat in Freya's cave, and carefully scoops up Atreus in his arms.

EXT/INT. MYSTIC GROVE/WITCH'S HOUSE (MIDGARD) - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

As they walk up the steps of the cave under Freya's home—

KRATOS
Freya! Open the door! We need your help!

Kratos kicks the door, but there is no response.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Woman, do you hear me? It is urgent!

FREYA (O.S.)
(sarcastically, from behind door)
I am still a god! Go away.

KRATOS
The boy has fallen ill! Freya!

The door flies open. FREYA rushes out and feels the boy's forehead, laying her other hand on his chest.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
He is ill.

Freya and Kratos meet eyes. She sees the fear and desperation on his face.

FREYA
Inside.

Kratos follows Freya into the house.

FREYA
This is no ordinary illness. The boy's true nature, *your* true nature, fights within him.

She gestures to a THATCH WORK COT, where Kratos lays Atreus down.

KRATOS
I did this to him... ? Will you help me?

The helpless pleading in his eyes is nothing we've ever seen from Kratos.

FREYA
Of course...

Freya sits on the cot, Atreus between them.

FREYA (CONT'D)
There is a rare ingredient found only in Helheim. The keeper that protects the Bridge of The Damned... I need its heart.

KRATOS
Hel...

FREYA
The Realm of the Dead. Do you know it?

KRATOS
Not this one...

FREYA
It is a land of unyielding cold. Fires cannot burn there, and no magic in all the nine realms can create a blaze. As for the dead... your frost axe will be useless. You'll need to find something else.

Kratos sits up straight, a grim recognition coming over him.

KRATOS
Then I must return home...

Kratos pauses, contemplating the bandages on his forearms with trepidation and regret.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
...dig up a past I swore would stay buried.

FREYA
Who you were before doesn't matter. This boy is not your past, he is your son... and he needs his father.

Kratos steels himself. Freya takes his arm, and with a sudden handful of GLOWING MAGIC, she traces the HELHEIM RUNE on his palm.

FREYA (CONT'D)
This rune opens the bridge to Helheim. When you are there, do not under any circumstances cross the Bridge of The Damned. There is no road back. Understand?

Kratos nods. From his cot, Atreus stirs, making a small, sick MOAN.

KRATOS
Boy...

FREYA
Heimili!

At her word, the great turtle stands and the house begins SHAKING—

FREYA (CONT'D)
You must hurry. Through my garden there's a path leading to my boat. Take it. Return home. Dig up your past. Do whatever you need to do. Just bring me back the bridge keeper's heart, and your son may survive. Now...

With a wave of her hand, the house stops shaking. As Kratos gets to the door, he lingers, without turning back.

KRATOS
Freya... When last we spoke... I was...

He struggles with the words, unaccustomed to apologies. She doesn't let him finish.

FREYA
No. You are right to distrust the word of a god. No need to explain. Not to me. Not for that.
(she turns to face him)
I will keep him safe. That's a mother's promise.

Kratos turns to her, with a nod of understanding. After one last look at his son, he EXITS.

As Kratos walks away from Freya's home towards the boat—

MIMIR'S HEAD
Helheim, of all places...
(no response)
You alright, brother?

KRATOS
I will do what I must. Leave me be.

MIMIR'S HEAD
As you wish.

Kratos finds FREYA'S BOAT waiting at the river bank behind her garden. An elemental creation, it looks like a slurry of mud in the shape of a boat, covered in orange leaves and blue flowers.

Kratos climbs into the BOAT OF LEAVES, and it begins moving quickly downstream towards his home, whether by current or by magic. CRIMSON CLOUDS form overhead, and a RED STORM gathers strength. LIGHTNING and THUNDER crash, as Kratos watches two STAGS run from the riverbank.

The CAMERA begins a slow and continuous circling motion around the boat. Without having to row, Kratos clenches his fists together, lost in thought, as the boat enters a dark tunnel. As the camera crosses his back, a strange BLUE LIGHT seems to illuminate the darkness before him. A moment later, we can see the source — a NEW PASSENGER on the boat, sitting directly across from him, where Atreus usually sits.

It is the goddess ATHENA.

No flesh and blood woman, but a living STATUE, her eyes an eerie pale blue, her skin emitting a faint, other-worldly GLOW. She regards Kratos with a patronizing air—an expression on her face that reads, simply, "I win."

As the camera circles back into a close-up on Kratos, he looks up, sensing her there—

KRATOS
(icy cold)
Athena...

The two gods stare at each other in silence. The camera continues to corkscrew around Kratos as his expression grows into absolute resolve. More thunder and lightning.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Get out of my head.

Athena smiles knowingly.

As the boat leaves the tunnel, the camera completes a revolution past Kratos' back, and we see that Athena is gone—only ever a product of his own mind.

The camera settles back into over-the-shoulder player control, and we can observe the vista of the Forest Iðunn as the RED STORM rages across it. Wildlife is scattering. High on a hilltop, a HEL-SHADOW SCOUT stares down as the boat passes.

The dead have reached the Forest.

EXT/INT. FOREST IÐUNN/KRATOS' HOUSE (MIDGARD) – NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

The boat reaches a river bank near Kratos' house. The boat of leaves MELTS and dissipates in the water as soon as he steps on shore.

Kratos makes his way back to the house as the red storm intensifies, swirling clouds and thunder claps escalating around him. A swarm of Hel-Reavers closes in, resistant to his Axe. He pummels them all with bare-fisted fury, clearing a path to his door.

As Kratos walks into the darkened house, the camera follows behind, slowly inching down to floor level and coming to rest on the BEARSKIN RUG. Kratos tosses it aside, and pulls open the TRAP DOOR where Atreus hid during Baldur's attack.

He kneels, reaches down, and pulls out something bundled in GRECIAN CLOTH. He sets it down, and hesitates... unconsciously running his a hand along one of his BANDAGED FOREARMS. He then unfolds the cloth, and we see what is nestled inside...

THE BLADES OF CHAOS.

He runs his hand along their surface. The blades look worn and ancient, but still HUM with power. THUNDER and LIGHTNING reverberate outside as ominous music swells. Looking down at the bandages on his forearms, Kratos notices they are now freshly soaked with BLOOD.

He slowly wraps the chains over his forearms, wincing with each coil. Swimming in a mix of competing emotions, part of him feels complete... the other part afraid that this step back into his old life won't just be a short detour.

We notice a figure silhouetted in the open doorway—the ghostly ATHENA statue has returned. She watches with a satisfied smile. Kratos senses her there but does not look up. When she finally speaks, her tone of voice is matter-of-fact, not taunting. She doesn't need to exaggerate... the words carry the weight.

ATHENA
There's nowhere you can hide, Spartan.

He ignores her, and continues to wrap the chains around his arms as she speaks.

ATHENA (CONT'D)
Put as much distance between you and the truth as you want, it changes nothing. Pretend to be everything you are not... teacher... husband... *father*...

The "father" barb elicits an ugly glance from Kratos.

ATHENA (CONT'D)
...but there is one unavoidable truth you will never escape: You cannot change. You will always be a monster.

The chains now wrapped around both arms, Kratos at last picks up the blades, one in each hand. Magical FIRE ripples through them as they come back to life.

KRATOS
I know.

Kratos looks Athena square in the eye.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
But I am your monster no longer.

Flaming blades in hand, Kratos strides towards the doorway. He walks through the apparition... dispelling it in a CLOUD OF DUST.

As Kratos steps out of his home, an enormous horde of HEL-WALKERS await him. It's as if his presence has attracted all the undead of the forest.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Alright, brother... let's see what those blades can do.

Kratos unleashes the power of his classic weapons. Their long range, wide area of attack, and innate Fire magic allow him to cut down the icy footsoldiers by the dozens, like reaping wheat in an open field.

When the last Hel-Walker falls to the Blades of Chaos—

MIMIR'S HEAD
My, yes... those blades will serve quite well in Helheim.

As Kratos steps into the Realm Between Realms to reach the Realm Travel Room—

MIMIR'S HEAD
Well, I'm pretty sure you weren't talking to *me* back there. Anything you'd like to get off your chest, brother?

(no answer)
I can assure you I'm unsurpassed in keeping confidences.

(no answer)
Well, you know where to find me.

(confidentially)
And for the record, I'd already guessed you were Greek. "Athena"? Dead giveaway.

INT. TÝR'S TEMPLE/BROK'S SHOP (MIDGARD) - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

KRATOS steps out of the mystic gateway at BROK'S SHOP. The dwarf looks up at him and sees the BLADES OF CHAOS.

BROK
What—? Hey! You reek of foreign magick.

BROK (CONT'D)
Sweet Nanna's nethers, what are *those...?*

Kratos stops for a moment as Brok steps in front of him. He circles Kratos, trying to get a good look at the BLADES OF CHAOS. The LIGHT that glints off them is especially ass-kicking here. Brok admires the craftsmanship with wonder.

BROK (CONT'D)
(awed reverence)
I have never seen the like... That's gotta be a family *heirloom..*

KRATOS
NO. Nor will it ever be.

BROK
(insulted/distracted)
Son, my brother and me created Mjölnir for the big idiot... I know from quality. And *them*... them's special.

(noticing the Atreus' absence)
Say, where's the little turd?

KRATOS
He has fallen ill.

It's clear from his tone it's serious.

BROK
(genuine concern)
No... What happened? Aesir?

KRATOS
No. The fault is mine... and my responsibility to make it right.

Kratos' words strike a chord. Lost in thought for a moment, Brok NODS and lets out a DEEP SIGH.

BROK
(regretful, to himself)
We all gotta take responsibility some time, huh?
(to Kratos)
Say, what can I do to help him? I can do things. You want I should tag along?

KRATOS
No. Your work here is enough.

BROK
All right.

Brok leads Kratos back to his workbench.

BROK (CONT'D)
So where you off to in such a hurry?

KRATOS
The realm of the dead.

BROK
(alarmed)
Helheim?!? Shit... this *is* serious. I'll be keeping my eye on you...

Kratos stalks towards the Realm Travel Room.

20. THE HEART OF HELHEIM

INT/EXT. TÝR'S TEMPLE/REALM TRAVEL ROOM (MIDGARD/HELHEIM) - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Kratos approaches the REALM TRAVEL TABLE and selects HELHEIM.

MIMIR'S HEAD
(grimly)
And it's done. We really are doing this.

After the travel sequence, as Kratos approaches the DOOR TO HELHEIM—

MIMIR'S HEAD (CONT'D)
Let me take this moment to tell you that what you are about to do is absolutely insane. Not even Odin can survive this cold, so I hope those blades work.

EXT. TÝR'S BRIDGE (HELHEIM) – NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

HELHEIM: A blanket of fog in the blistering cold. Kratos takes a frostbitten breath and presses on.

KRATOS
Is this the bridge Freya spoke of?

MIMIR'S HEAD
No, we're still on the realm travel bridge. We're after the Bridge of the Damned. The dead use it to cross into their permanent home, the *city* of Helheim. The bridge keeper who minds admission—he's the one we want. Just follow this bridge... should lead us straight to him.
(beat)
You know... I'd really hoped never to see this place again.

As they journey up the bridge, they see the shivering, huddled spirits of DEAD MEN marching across the bridge. Some of the dead seem confused, and are not walking in the right direction. They dissipate and re-form as they are walked through (or attacked), but take no notice of Kratos' presence.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Oh, this is all wrong. Only the newly-dead should be here. There's too many. The gate must be closed... and if the gate's closed, then it's true—Hel's full up. Without the Valkyrie to sort and cull them, Hel is overwhelmed.

As Kratos scales a crack-climb—

KRATOS
When we killed the reavers near my home... they came here? How did they return so quickly?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Time doesn't move the same between all realms, especially where the spirit world is concerned.

KRATOS
Like the light of Alfheim...

MIMIR'S HEAD
The opposite, in fact... the Lake of Souls feels faster than Alfheim time, but Hel is much slower than Midgard. Sorry, I'm sure that's confusing—

KRATOS
If we will be back to my son all the sooner, that is good.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Ah! Aren't you a quick study.

As Kratos searches a sunken pit for an exit, after defeating a round of enemies—

KRATOS
This Valhalla... is it within Hel?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Oh no, no—Valhalla is part of Asgard. Only the worthy dead go there, the warriors who die in glorious combat. Hel is for those who die in dishonor.

KRATOS
Criminals.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Aye, and those dead of disease, mishap, age...

KRATOS
It is dishonorable to grow old?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Well, never too late to go out fighting, I suppose.

As Kratos heads towards an opening leading outside—

KRATOS
Will killing the Bridge-Keeper help the dead leave Midgard?

MIMIR'S HEAD
I don't expect it will. Though I don't suppose it will make things any worse, either. It'll be one less obstacle for the living to reach the inner sanctum of Helheim... but who'd be mad enough to go there?

Kratos clears a crack-climb, revealing a vista before him. The BRIDGE OF THE DAMNED stretches over a yawning CHASM and disappears into the MIST beyond. Below, the BRIDGE KEEPER, a beast around the size of mountain troll, stands watch over a PARADE OF DEAD waiting their turn to pass. He holds a MAGICAL TOTEM in his massive arms.

MIMIR'S HEAD
The Bridge of the Damned. And there's the keeper, making sure the dead are really dead.

KRATOS
What is that he holds?

MIMIR'S HEAD
That totem contains a powerful source of magical energy—the very power of Helheim itself. But what *you* want is his heart. Just take it and we can leave.

KRATOS
How?

MIMIR'S HEAD
(smiles)
Start some trouble. You can do that, right?

EXT. BRIDGE OF THE DAMNED (HELHEIM) -- NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

When Kratos drops down onto the bridge, The Keeper of the Bridge immediately springs to life, sensing his presence. It jumps down, crashing its totem to the ground—the magical vortex within it sucking the HEL-WINDS from the nearby gateway, sealing off the area until he can expel the intruder. The Bridge Keeper has one job, and this is it.

The former God of War squares off with the Keeper in an epic battle, his fiery Blades of Chaos ultimately giving him the upper hand. After a hard-won fight to knock the Keeper down, Kratos' blades penetrate the Keeper's totem, CRACKING IT IN TWO with a fiery flash. Kratos plunges the blades into the Keeper's eyes. It is done.

Kratos circles the body, breathing heavily from the grueling melee.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Now the heart, brother. You'll have to get your hands dirty.

KRATOS climbs atop the motionless corpse of the BRIDGE KEEPER, and sinks to his knees. As cued by player interaction, Kratos PLUNGES one blade deeply into the Keeper's chest, and carves down to create an incision. He readies the 2nd blade, and on next interaction he brings them both down even more deeply into the cut. With a 3rd interaction, he spreads the CHEST CAVITY open with a sickening CRUNCH.

After shaking the blood from his BLADES and sheathing them, he reaches into the gaping chest with both arms. He fishes around and we hear the sound of SHIFTING VISCERA. With a fierce yank, he pulls out the STEAMING HEART of the creature in a SPRAY OF BLOOD.

He stows it away in a POUCH, then pauses for a moment before rising. Kratos lays his hand on the Keeper's chest, in a gesture of thanks, or perhaps apology. With that, he stands and steps down off the corpse, turning to give a look back at the gory mess he created. He can only shake his head at what the situation has brought him to. But this is for his son, and he stows any feelings of remorse away.

Kratos holds up MIMIR'S HEAD.

KRATOS
I have the heart. I need nothing more?

MIMIR'S HEAD
You're set. But better not to linger here, though, eh?

Unbeknownst to Kratos, the mists of the sky above him have been darkening . Through the blackening fog and smoke, across the Bridge of the Damned, a GIANT FACE takes form. Yellow eyes ripple with LIGHTNING and stare directly into Kratos' soul. There is no mistaking the face of his father, ZEUS.

ZEUS
(seething)
Kratos...

Kratos looks at the apparition with bewilderment and alarm.

KRATOS
(confused)
Zeus?

MIMIR'S HEAD
(to Kratos)
Zeus?!?

KRATOS
(to Mimir's Head)
My father...

MIMIR'S HEAD
Your father was Zeus!? Well, that explains a *lot*.

The face of Zeus recedes into the dark fog. Kratos holds up Mimir's Head to face his own, and gestures across the bridge.

KRATOS
What is that place?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Never go there. Understand?

The dark fog begins to clear. Kratos nods and returns the head to his hip.

KRATOS
How is he here? That is not possible.

MIMIR'S HEAD
It's just an illusion. Hel's known for torturing its inhabitants with their own past. We should focus on getting back to your son.

Nearby the LOCKED EXIT GATE, amidst debris, Kratos discovers half of the Bridge Keeper's TOTEM. Within it, he sees a spherical WIND TRAP, coursing with MAGICAL ENERGIES.

When the player Interacts with the magical totem, trigger the following—

BROK APPEARS from behind the magical totem. He looks like he's trying to hide.

BROK
Pssst.

MIMIR'S HEAD
(startled)
Aah!

BROK
Sshhh! I ain't supposed to be here. S'cold! Real quick, gimme your blades.

KRATOS
(suspicious)
Why?

BROK
I said I'd help you and I aim to. C'mon!

Kratos grudgingly hands Brok the blades.

BROK (CONT'D)
My equipment's in Midgard. Be right back.

Brok ducks around a corner and DISAPPEARS.

MIMIR'S HEAD
You... you don't suppose he nicked those, do you?

Before Kratos can answer, Brok returns with the blades in his hands. They look different, a new Hel-ish hue of magic about them.

BROK
There! Now they're ready for the Winds of Hel. Just target this magical glowy bit here with your blades and throw.

Once the player whips the chain blades into the magical totem--

Kratos whips the blades into the GLOWING ENERGY. There's a FLASH OF LIGHT, and the blades *drain the energy* from the trap within the magical totem. Kratos takes the COURSING ENERGY into himself, then pulls the blades loose, and looks at them. Flurries of absorbed magical energy dance along the surface of the blades.

BROK
Now target that wind trap with your blades—it's that little ball hanging in the middle of the door there, see it? Just let 'er loose.

Once the player targets and chain-whips the WIND TRAP—

The Winds of Helheim travel down the length of the chain blades and empty into the wind trap. The locked door suddenly opens.

BROK (CONT'D)
See that? Now you can absorb and release the Winds of Hel whenever it damn pleases you, so you're welcome and I'm leaving. This place is cold enough to freeze a pair of pigeon eggs.

BROK DISAPPEARS behind the totem.

MIMIR'S HEAD
I sometimes wonder if there was once some sort of accident in his brain.

KRATOS
We have been away too long.

INT. TÝR'S TEMPLE/REALM TRAVEL ROOM (HELHEIM/MIDGARD) - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

In the Realm Travel room, upon activating the return to Midgard—

MIMIR'S HEAD
Your father... was *Zeus*. I finally understand. I'm dangling from the hip of the bloody Ghost of Sparta!

KRATOS
Do NOT call me that.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Don't mistake me, brother. From what I heard, the pantheon had it coming. But it's still a bit to take in. I knew you hate gods, but you really can't stay away from them, can you?

KRATOS
You must say nothing to the boy. He must never know.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Bollocks, brother, respectfully, bollocks. He *has* to know. He'll never be whole without the truth.
(no answer)
Look, I get it. You hate the gods. <u>All</u> gods. It's no accident that includes yourself. And it includes your *boy*, don't you see that? He *feels* that! He can't help

what he is. He can't begin to help it, because you haven't even told him. It's all connected, man!

KRATOS
(ambiguously)
You... will tell him *nothing*.

MIMIR'S HEAD
(accepting)
Very well.

21. THE TRUTH

INT. TÝR'S TEMPLE/BROK'S SHOP (MIDGARD) - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

As they pass Brok's shop on the way to Freya's—

BROK
Hey, so you know that shortcut between realms? Well, I made it better! Or I might have brokes it.

KRATOS
(growing angry)
We *use* that...

BROK
I know you do! So I took a few gusts from them Winds of Hel and made it so ain't just one-way. Now you can use it to travel to and from. If I didn't breaks it.

KRATOS
(to Mimir's Head)
Then we can take it to Freya.

MIMIR'S HEAD
There's an idea, brother!

As the Fast Travel Gate is reforming itself—

BROK
Might be some kinks to sort out, but you'll make it.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Just go, brother.

EXT/INT. MYSTIC GROVE/WITCH'S HOUSE (MIDGARD) - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

They are suddenly spit out of the Fast Travel branch, and find themselves in Freya's Cave, near the dock.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Well, this isn't right. But close enough. He did say there were kinks.

KRATOS
We must hurry.

Kratos walks into an unexpected scene of domestic tranquility: Atreus sleeps nestled in the thatch work cot. FREYA sits next to him with a MOIST RAG to his forehead. A HEARTH burns warmly nearby.

KRATOS
The heart...

Freya notices Kratos and stands.

FREYA
You have it!

KRATOS
Yes.

Kratos holds out the KEEPER'S HEART. She takes it from him and places it into a BUBBLING CAULDRON nearby. BLUE-GREEN LIGHT emerges in a burst of STEAM.

Kratos reaches out... with hesitation, touching Atreus' forehead with the front of his hand—(like he's never checked someone's temperature before).

FREYA (CONT'D)
(noticing his error, without judgment)
Back of your hand.

Kratos flips his hand over, and holds it there.

KRATOS
He is still ill.

Freya dips a BOWL into the concoction and brings some back to the cot. Steam billows off the surface.

FREYA
I can break the fever, but to heal...

KRATOS
...he must know the truth of what he is.

FREYA
Yes.

KRATOS
It is not so simple.

Freya sets down the bowl with her remedy.

FREYA
Help me prop him up.

Together they raise his head enough to begin breathing in the HEALING FUMES of her potion. Kratos and Freya wait, seated on the cot, the boy between them.

FREYA (CONT'D)
Did I tell you I have a son too? It's been... forever since I last saw him. At his birth, the runes foretold a needless death. The babe in my arms was so small, so helpless. I knew right then I would do anything to protect him. No matter the sacrifice...
(trailing off, reflecting on her loss)
Of course everything I did, I did for myself. I let my needs, my *fears*, come before what he needed... and I couldn't see his resentment until it was too late. Don't make the same mistake. Have faith in him. I know the truth isn't simple... but nothing is when it involves your child.

Kratos rises, and turns away.

KRATOS
It is a curse. The boy has been cursed.

Atreus STIRS suddenly—

ATREUS
(muttering)
Don't leave without me.

Kratos speaks in a tone we've never heard from him—that of a grateful father.

KRATOS
I will not.

He climbs out of bed, stumbling...then steady.

ATREUS
I'm better now.

KRATOS
I see that.
(to Freya)
Is he well enough to travel?

FREYA
(pointed look)
For now.

ATREUS
It won't happen again. I promise.

Though the words are stern, his tone is tender.

KRATOS
You see that it does not.

Atreus nods, solemnly, and walks towards the door. Kratos and Freya stand. There is some unspoken bond between them now, begging for some acknowledgement. Kratos hold out his arm. Gently, Freya takes it in a forearm handshake. She nods in recognition, a silent understanding between exiled gods, or maybe just between parents.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Freya... I will not forget this.

The boy approaches Freya.

ATREUS
(to Freya)
Thanks...

FREYA
Your father did the heavy lifting. You should stay.
Recover.

KRATOS
You have done enough.

FREYA
You know my door is always open to you.

As they walk away from Freya's home—

MIMIR'S HEAD
Now then... before Modi so rudely interrupted us, we were just about to explore Týr's vault.

KRATOS
Yes. To find the Black Rune. Boy, do you know the way from here?

ATREUS
(listlessly)
Oh. I don't know.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Sure, you do, lad. We need a boat!

ATREUS
(listlessly)
I dunno, I guess we need a boat.

MIMIR'S HEAD
(off Atreus' uncharacteristic behavior)
Okay then!

EXT. MYSTIC GROVE/WITCH'S CAVERN (MIDGARD) - DAWN (CONTINUOUS)

They approach the dock. Kratos pulls SEAWEED off the hull of the boat.

KRATOS
Get in. I will pull.

KRATOS pulls the OLD BOAT with Atreus in it through knee-deep MUD.

KRATOS
You are quiet.

The boy doesn't answer.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Are you not better?

ATREUS
(shrugging)
I guess.

Kratos drags the boat in silence for a few moments.

KRATOS
I know you overheard my talk with Freya. You think you understand. But you do not.

Silence.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Why do you say nothing?

ATREUS
(broken and bitter)
You said I was cursed. You think I'm weak, because I'm not like you. I know I was never what you wanted. But after all this, I thought... maybe things were different.

KRATOS
You do not know everything, boy.

ATREUS
No. But at least I know the truth now.

KRATOS
The truth...

Kratos stops walking. A painful expression flashes across his face.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
The truth.

He knows what he must do... no matter how long he's dreaded it. Without turning to face his son, he takes the plunge—

KRATOS (CONT'D)
I am a god, boy... from another land, far from here.
When I came to these shores, I chose to live as a man.
But the truth is... I was born a god. And so were you.

Silence.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Boy? Have you nothing to say?

ATREUS
(cautious optimism)
I'm... Can I... turn into an animal?

This is not what Kratos expected, and relief washes over him.

KRATOS
Can you turn into an animal? No... no, I do not think so.

Kratos reaches the dock and slings the boat into the water. He looks at Atreus who sits staring, speechless, looking confused.

ATREUS
(to himself)
I'm a god.
(to Kratos)
Mother knew? She was a god too?

KRATOS
No, she was mortal, but she knew my true nature.

ATREUS
I'm a *god*. Why did you wait so long to tell me?

Kratos climbs into the boat, and sits across from him. He looks deep into the boy's eyes, and puts his massive hand comfortingly on his son's cheek.

KRATOS
I hoped to spare you. Being a god... it can be lifetime of anguish and tragedy. *That* is the curse.

Atreus nods, understanding.

ATREUS
What sorts of things can I do? Can I fly? Or turn invisible? I don't feel like a god.

Kratos sits back, picks up his oar, and pushes away from the dock.

KRATOS
I do not know the reach of your godhood, but over time, we will learn.

Kratos takes Mimir's Head from his hip, and hands it to Atreus to place in his usual spot beside him. They resume their journey.

ATREUS
You sure I can't turn into a wolf?

KRATOS
You are welcome to surprise me...

As they boat through the cave network under Freya's cavern—

ATREUS
Is this why I hear voices sometimes? You sure you've never heard any?

KRATOS
Not as you do.

MIMIR'S HEAD
That's no surprise. Every god is unique.

ATREUS
So...maybe I won't get strong like father... but I'll have abilities all my own?

MIMIR'S HEAD
You already do, laddy! Your faculty for language is extraordinary for one so young. Time alone will tell what else you'll become capable of.

ATREUS
So... you knew all along.

MIMIR'S HEAD
I did, lad. But I've known more than my share of gods.

ATREUS
Me too, apparently.

As they continue to row—

ATREUS
I wonder who else knew I was a god... Freya for sure...Brok and Sindri?

KRATOS
They do not need to know.

ATREUS
[Gasps] Baldur! Does he know? Is that why he's after us? Do you know him from before?

KRATOS
The day of your mother's funeral was the first I ever saw Baldur. That is the truth.

EXT. LAKE OF NINE/TÝR'S TEMPLE (MIDGARD) - DAWN (CONTINUOUS)

They clear the walls of the canyon cave, and emerge into the expansive Lake, where the boy notices again a strange glimmer where the missing REALM TOWER should be.

ATREUS
This is where the tower to Jötunheim should be. Feels... strange, somehow.

MIMIR'S HEAD
No doubt some arcane magicks were involved. I would be not at all surprised to learn you were sensitive to that.

As they approach the dock at Týr's Temple—

ATREUS
Hey—we don't have to go *right* back to Týr's Vault, do we? I mean... we're Gods! We can do whatever we want, right? What do you *really* feel like doing right now?

KRATOS
I will show you

22. THE BLACK RUNE

EXT/INT. TÝR'S TEMPLE/TÝR'S VAULT (MIDGARD) - DAY

As the return through CHISEL DOOR ENTRANCE to TÝR'S VAULT—

ATREUS
Let's try this again... without interruptions.

Interacting with the sand bowl causes the PLATFORM to descend.

ATREUS
I wish I'd known I was a god in Alfheim... I wouldn't have felt so bad about killing so many Elves.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Well, I'm not sure *that's* the lesson...

KRATOS
You've done nothing to regret. The Elves forced their affairs upon us.

ATREUS
No, I *get* it now. We had god things to do, and they were in the way, dragging us into their little problems.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Again, are we just leaving that there...?

ATREUS
I mean, just *knowing* we're gods makes me feel so much *stronger.*

MIMIR'S HEAD
Maybe you feel a little *too* good right now. With power comes a big choice, lad. You can either serve yourself or put your godhood in the service of others. Like Týr did.

As they descend, the walls of the platform shaft reveal the first in a series of MASSIVE TAPESTRIES, in tribute to the great deeds of Týr. Atreus runs over to study each as they appear.

The FIRST TAPESTRY depicts two opposing armies, battle-ready. Between them stands Týr, his arms raised to halt both sides. Before him, the opposing Kings shake hands. A commemoration of some great conflict avoided.

ATREUS
People really loved him, huh?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Aye. A god of war... but one who fought for peace. Had a reputation for being heroic and lawful, using his power and knowledge to stop wars, rather than start them.

ATREUS
So there *are* good gods...

MIMIR'S HEAD
Once in a moon, it's been known to happen, yes.

The SECOND TAPESTRY shows Týr's voyages to distant lands. The iconography of each civilization is recognizable to the player, if not perhaps to the characters—Egyptian. Japanese. Mesoamerican. GREEK.

ATREUS
This one mentions places I've never even heard of. Seems Týr really liked to travel.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Týr believed the mind, not might, was key to preventing war and chaos. And he also knew visiting other cultures would give him perspective staying in one place could not. While Odin always hoarded knowledge, guarding it jealously, Týr was open and sharing with his learning and his wisdom. For this, mortals adored Týr—showing their love by bringing him gifts the world over.

The THIRD TAPESTRY presents the construction of Týr's TRAVEL TEMPLE. Týr, at center, coordinates GIANTS of all shapes and sizes in the building of a HENGE, the doorways of the Travel Room. A delegation of WHITE ELVES is delivering a contribution of BIFRÖST LIGHT. Overlaying the scene, the WORLD TREE looms, its branches and roots encoiling runic symbols representing all nine realms. It is a confluence of artisanry and magic, and every bit the rare and legendary collaboration Freya had described.

ATREUS
So what ever happened to Týr?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Odin came to regard him as a threat to his rule... he suspected Týr of collaborating to aid the Giants instead of helping to steal their secrets for the Aesir. Same thing he accused me of, frankly—though in Týr's case, I believe he was right.

ATREUS
You think Týr was helping the Giants?

MIMIR'S HEAD
I do. He felt responsible for the suffering visited upon them by Odin. I suspect he had something to do with helping them cover their tracks.

ATREUS
The missing Jötunheim tower!

MIMIR'S HEAD
Correct. Whatever happened to it, I believe it could only have been done with Týr and the Giants working together.

The platform reaches bottom. Kratos pulls open a door for their exit into a small hallway.

KRATOS
Where is this Black Rune, Head?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Don't know. I've never been in here.

Exiting the hallway into the MAIN CHAMBER, a GLOWING SPHERE is seen in the center of the room, hovering over a circular PIT. Inside the sphere, a BLACK RUNESTONE.

ATREUS
The stone! That has to be it!

As Atreus runs towards the sphere, there is a FLASH of blue light as the room suddenly AWAKENS, as if his presence tripped a magical alarm.

The blue light resolves into particles that swirl up into something resembling a thurible, dangling on a chain over the central pit. As the scenter rises, so does the sphere containing the rune. Magically listing into place around the sphere, an ORNATE GOLDEN RING, followed by another larger ring surrounding the first.

ATREUS
(exasperated)
Naturally.

A third and largest ring ascends from the pit to encompass the first two. As the THREE RINGS rotate concentrically but freely around the sphere, each one begins to project a translucent magical barrier.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Didn't think it would be that easy?

ATREUS
No.
(to himself)
Was kind of hoping though...
(to Kratos)
So what now?

The sphere within spheres hovers out of reach, its glow illuminating the central chamber of the vault. Several doors and passageways lead out from the hub. TREASURE pours out of many alcoves. A couple of STONE TROLL STATUES overlook the room.

When the player spots the Winds of Hel wind trap on the outer ring—

MIMIR'S HEAD
Brother, up there—the Winds of Hel.

ATREUS
The winds of what?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Oh... we forget to mention that? When you were sick, we went to Helheim to get your cure.

ATREUS
You did?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Terrible experience, by the by. Your da' picked up a new trick though... with a little help from Brok.

ATREUS
Brok was there too!?!
ATREUS (CONT'D)
I... but... We'll get back to this later.

After depositing the energy into the first Winds of Hel trap, Kratos is able to turn a CHAIN WHEEL. It opens a gate to a hallway full of SAW BLADES.

ATREUS
Well that's unfriendly.

Atreus walks over to the "Scotland table" and picks up a SGIAN-DUBH, a beautifully ornate Scottish knife—

MIMIR'S HEAD
(wistfully)
Ah... a sgian-dubh from my homeland. Used to have one of my own back in the day. You should take it, boy!

KRATOS
Yes, boy... take it. We might need to butter bread somewhere on our travels.

MIMIR'S HEAD
This is why no one likes you.

Kratos and Atreus navigate the saw blades and exit into a TREASURE ROOM filled with items from all over the world. They survey the room, marveling at all of the glittering, exotic objects.

ATREUS
Wow. Look at that!

Something on a table to the left catches the boy's eye. He races over to get a better look.

Kratos walks over to another table, scanning it for something useful. He notices a CLAY FLASK with DISTINCTIVE MARKINGS. He picks it up, pulls out its CORK, and INHALES DEEPLY as he lifts it to his nose. A slight smile crosses his face. He re-corks the flask and stashes it away in his POUCH.

Then Kratos sees something that makes his smile fade...

...sitting on a TALL PEDESTAL is a GREEK VASE illustrated in the silhouetted "black-figure" style of Greek antiquity. It illustrates a SPARTAN WARRIOR standing atop a MOUNTAIN OF BLOODY BODIES.

As Kratos walks closer, we get a better look at the warrior, and see a tell-tale RED TATTOO across his left eye. It is Kratos... screaming at the heavens in rage, the BLADES chained to his arms dripping with blood. Kratos takes the vase in both hands and stares at it with a haunted expression.

Atreus approaches chipperly from behind, a large PHARAOH'S CROWN wobbling on his head.

ATREUS
What'd you find—?

Kratos quickly SMASHES the vase before the boy can see it.

KRATOS
Enough distraction. Do not forget why we are here.

He walks away from the broken pottery. Atreus is taken aback by the sudden change in mood.

ATREUS
(quietly, disappointed)
Okay...

The boy sets the crown down on the table and walks away.

Atreus walks back over to the "Egypt table," quietly scanning it before picking up an EGYPTIAN SCARAB carved from blue soapstone.

MIMIR'S HEAD
That's from a great desert land very far from here.

ATREUS
Do gods live there?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Oh my, yes... many, many gods.

ATREUS
Good or bad?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Not as simple as that, I'm afraid...

Exiting the Treasure Room, Kratos and Atreus are attacked by more enemies. After dispatching them, Atreus pipes up about something that's been bothering him.

ATREUS
What did you see in the vault that set you off?

KRATOS
It is not important.

ATREUS
Seemed important to you.

KRATOS
It was a rash impulse. You need not dwell on my failings.

ATREUS
Wow. That was almost an apology. Well, I guess you do like to smash pottery.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Ha!

A little later, while Kratos cranks the second CHAIN WHEEL—

ATREUS
Look, I just want to know the truth from now on, okay? I don't care of it hurts me or not. I want to learn. Just 'cause you hate being a god doesn't mean I have to.

After more traps, they enter another large, circular room, but this one's a little different than the previous two. On the opposite wall is a massive MURAL of the Giant wolves, SKÖLL and HATI.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Look! It's the wolf-giants, Sköll and Hati!

MIMIR'S HEAD
That's right, "the bringers of day and night."

ATREUS
Ragnarök begins when they catch the sun and moon, right? Did Týr know them?

MIMIR'S HEAD
(curiously)
I don't know. Liked them well enough to cover a massive wall in his vault with them though.

Stepping back out to the main chamber—

ATREUS
Don't you enjoy it at all? Being a god? Out on an adventure in some amazing place? Maybe mother

ATREUS (CONT'D)
wanted us to have a little fun. Everything we've seen and done... maybe it was her gift.

Continuing with the puzzle—

ATREUS (CONT'D)
You know... for someone so loved, Týr sure was paranoid.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Thanks to Odin—with good reason.

After completing the puzzle, Kratos grabs ahold of the final WHEEL CRANK. As he rotates it, the RINGS protecting the BLACK RUNESTONE can be seen descending to the floor through the open doorway.

ATREUS
The runestone—it's lowering!

Just as the rings reach the floor, MAGICAL TREE ROOTS spring out and bind Kratos in place against the wheel crank. He GROWLS in paid as he struggles to move.

ATREUS
What's going on?!?

KRATOS
(through the pain)
Trap...

The floor below Kratos begins to descend as a BURST OF WATER shoots out of PIPES in the floor.

ATREUS
Father!

After the initial burst, the water begins to run down the sides of the basin Kratos stands in and pools around his feet. It slowly begins to RISE.

Close on Kratos' neck, we notice a ROOT TENDRIL creep across the protection stave Freya painted there. Broken, it DISPELS in a quick flurry of magic.

KRATOS
Boy! Get out of here!

ATREUS
I'm fine! How do we get you out?

KRATOS
Pull chains... on the wall.

ATREUS
(starting to panic)
But... there are three of them! What do I do?!?!

KRATOS
Atreus... focus. You can do this.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Please hurry! I don't know yet if I can drown.

ATREUS
(rushed)
Okay... think. Hati's the silver one. He hunts the moon. Sköll's gold and he chases the sun. For Ragnarök to happen, they have to eat them. But these are out of order.

KRATOS
Good boy.

ATREUS
(rushed, figuring it out)
So the moon goes on the left... sun on the right, with Midgard in the middle. But which bar do I pull?

Icons for the Sun, Moon, and Earth are arranged on a track, and can be moved into proper order using the system of levers. After successful completion of the puzzle, the water drains as the platform lifts up, but Kratos is still locked to it.

ATREUS
We did it!

MIMIR'S HEAD
Well, I can't drown. Guess that's something.

As the platform ascends, Atreus realizes it's rising *past* the original height of the floor. Also rising from the floor is a MECHANISM pulling a LARGE CHAIN—

ATREUS
(confused)
We're not stopping! Wait... what's that big chain fo—

Looking up, Atreus sees SPIKES lowering down toward his father as he rises to meet them.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Father! Above you!

KRATOS
Boy! You have to stop that chain!

Atreus runs over to it.

ATREUS
HOW!?!

KRATOS
(at a loss)
I... I do not know!

The boy freezes.

ATREUS
Wait! I know what to do!

He unsheathes the MOTHER'S KNIFE.

KRATOS
Her knife?

ATREUS
There's no other way!

Atreus STABS the knife into in the rotating mechanism, jamming it. The platform continues to rise, but the chain is kinked. Finally, just before the platform reaches the spikes, the mechanism EXPLODES, SHATTERING the knife. Chains explode off their gears in a sequence all around them. The root-trap RELEASES its grip on Kratos.

Immediately following the drama—

KRATOS
Her knife...

ATREUS
(crestfallen)
I know... but it saved you.

KRATOS
That was cunning, boy.

After breaking through a gate on the top level to escape the death trap room, our heroes return to the main room balcony. The rings fall away, and a platform rises up from the pit, making the glowing sphere containing the black runestone accessible.

ATREUS
The rune's free! I think we did it.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Aye — let's go see what Týr's got for us.

Atreus notices something about his father's neck—

ATREUS
Oh, no... Freya's protection rune— it rubbed off! What should we do?

KRATOS
(only a moment's hesitation)
We keep going.

After Kratos and Atreus climb down a rope from the balcony to the lower level—

ATREUS
There it is! We got it!

Atreus runs over to the sphere containing the BLACK RUNESTONE and finds a DISPEL LOCK MASK on it, the sort that he's used his knife to get past plenty of times... but he instinctively reaches for it now and finds it gone. Kratos observes the boy suddenly remembering his mother's knife is no more.

KRATOS
Boy.

Atreus turns to find Kratos holding out to him a HUNTING KNIFE with crude GREEK ENGRAVINGS along the hilt.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Here.

Atreus hesitates, unsure if this is a test of some sort. He wraps his hand cautiously around the handle. Kratos closes his hand over the boy's—gripping it tightly—and wraps his other hand around both. Kneeling, he draws his son close.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
On the day you were born, I made two knives, mixing metals from my home and this land. One for myself, and when you were ready, one for you. Today is that day.

Kratos releases his grip, and Atreus is left holding the knife. He turns it over, admiring the craftsmanship.

ATREUS
So I'm a man now, like you.

KRATOS
No. We are not men. We are more than that. The responsibility is far greater.

Kratos puts his hands on the boy's shoulders.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
And you must be better than me. Understand?

Atreus looks at the knife, then back at his father and NODS.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Say it.

ATREUS
I will be better.

Kratos, not fully convinced the message has quite sunken in, puts his hand on the boy's knife-hand.

KRATOS
The power of this weapon, any weapon, comes from here...

Kratos points to the boy's heart.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
...but only when tempered by this.

Kratos points to the boy's head.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
By the discipline, the self-control, of the one who wields it. That is where the true strength of a warrior lies. You must never forget that.

Atreus nods.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Good then. Come.

Kratos stands and Atreus returns to the DISPEL LOCK MASK, new knife in hand and ready to take it down. He stabs it into the MOUTH of the STONE FACE and gives it a twist.

ATREUS
(whispers)
Dreifa.

It glows for a second and the MAGICAL BARRIER disappears.

Kratos reaches down and picks up what looks like an ONYX STONE...

...except there's nothing on it. He tosses it to ATREUS.

KRATOS
Blank.

Atreus catches the stone... and at his touch, it jolts alive with magic. Light pours out of the black stone as if cracks through in an egg. There is a distinct RUNIC SHAPE to those cracks, projecting a yellow glow.

ATREUS
Wait...

The RUNIC GLOW penetrates Atreus' arm and spreads down like iridescent tattoos of the runes within. He watches them spider-web up to his other arm. The stone seemingly runs out of light, and crumbles into black dust. Whatever runic secret the stone held, it is within the boy now.

Suddenly, across the room the, TWO STONE STATUES of the ANCIENT TROLLS burst to life. Kratos steps in front of Atreus and calls over his shoulder—

KRATOS
The rune! Did you see it?!

ATREUS
(readying his bow)
Yes!

KRATOS
Are you *certain*?

ATREUS
I got it. Trust me.

KRATOS
(facing the troll)
Good then. Aim for the face!

After defeating the last Troll—

ATREUS
Whew! He was *big*. But no match for us *gods*...

KRATOS
I have beaten bigger.

ATREUS
(talking *"like a god"*, to his own amusement)
Heh... *"Puny troll!"*...

MIMIR'S HEAD
(slightly put off, and changing the subject)
Yeeeah... I'm turned around, which way is the sand-bowl back up?

Back in the sand bowl chamber, Atreus carves the rune with his knife, and encants as he did on the way down. The LARGE PLATFORM moves slowly up the shaft to the surface. Atreus peers upwards.

ATREUS
We're so close to the end...

KRATOS
Sit.

Atreus sits on a nearby bench. KRATOS sits across from him on another. He reaches into his BAG and pulls out the CLAY WINE FLASK he pilfered from the Trophy Room.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Lemnian wine. From the island of Lemnos, near the place of my birth.

The boy perks up. It's rare when his father talks about his past life. Kratos removes the CORK and takes a deep whiff of the flask before handing it to Atreus.

ATREUS
"Lemnos"...

Atreus examines the flask, then tries to hand it back to his father. Kratos pushes it back, gesturing for his son to take a sip.

KRATOS
To a journey's end.

ATREUS
Really?

The boy pulls the bottle to his nose and takes a careful SNIFF.

ATREUS
Smells like rotten eggs. Is it still good?

KRATOS
Possibly.

They boy takes a swig of the wine. His face immediately contorts in an attempt to choke down something he finds clearly vile. He hands the flask back to his father.

Kratos swallows the rest without breaking eye contact, then throws the empty flask over his shoulder.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Aaaah...

ATREUS
(imitating his father)
Aaaah...

A noise above, as the ceiling opens in a circular aperture just wide enough for the platform. RAYS OF BRIGHT SUNLIGHT stream in from the top of the shaft above onto our heroes, as their eyes adapt to the sudden illumination enveloping them. Atreus asks—

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Father? Why did you leave your home and come here?
Does it have to do with the other gods there?

In this light, Kratos can't conceal the flicker of dread in his eyes. He still doesn't know how to begin to talk about his bloody history. Disappointment flashes across the boy's face. He tries a new approach.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
It's just... you hate the gods so much. But Týr proves
that gods can be good. And *you're* good. You only killed
those deserving, right?

The platform nearly at the top, Kratos stands. He pauses for an uncomfortable moment... and then, with a backward glance and a nod, LIES.

KRATOS
Yes.

MIMIR, overhearing the whole conversation, can't help but try and diffuse the effect of Kratos' unforthcoming response.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Ah, but who's worthy enough to judge?

ATREUS
Quiet, head. *We* are. We know better.

Responding to Atreus, but clearly for Kratos—

MIMIR'S HEAD
Huh. Sounding more like your da' by the moment.

The platform-ride over, they find themselves looking down the TEMPLE BRIDGE. In the distance, The MOUNTAIN beckons them forward.

KRATOS
Ready?

ATREUS
Ready.

KRATOS
Come.

They set out on the bridge.

ATREUS
I think I'm going to like being a god... we go where we want, we do what we want, and now we're gonna go see the Giants!

MIMIR'S HEAD
Aye! Having learned that travel rune to Jötunheim, we can now head back to the gateway on top of the peak, and put that magic chisel to good use.

ATREUS
Nobody's getting in our way this time! Come on!

23. BAD LESSONS

EXT. LAKE OF NINE (MIDGARD) - DAY

While on the road, Atreus makes a confession—

ATREUS
(to Kratos)
Look, don't be mad... but I've seen those blades of yours before. They were under the house, when I was hiding. Is that why you never let me down there? Where'd they come from?

KRATOS
They are my burden. From a life that is behind me.

ATREUS
Well, they're in my life too, now, and I'd like to hear that story.

KRATOS
Those days are dead. To relive them is... needless.

ATREUS
How can it be needless if it's the truth?

KRATOS
One day, you will understand.

ATREUS
(unconvinced)
I'll take your word for it...

INT. TÝR'S BRIDGE/VANAHEIM TOWER (MIDGARD) - DAY

As they enter the GOLDEN TOWER off the Realm Travel Bridge—

ATREUS
I'm gonna tell Sindri I'm a god. I'd like to see the look on his face.

KRATOS
No. I may have kept your secret too long... but now you *will* keep OUR secret.

ATREUS
(non-committal)
Huh.

As they crack-climb up the Tower interior—

ATREUS
So... why should we hide what we are? Secrets are Odin's way. Shouldn't we be open, like Týr?

KRATOS
Týr kept secrets too. For good reasons. To protect people. It is wiser to be discreet.

ATREUS
That doesn't mean you should lie to your friends, or your family...

MIMIR'S HEAD
(trying to diffuse the situation)
I'm sure Sindri would understand and do the same, lad. Don't fret.

EXT. FOOTHILLS/GONDOLA CAMP (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

KRATOS and ATREUS enter through the MASSIVE RED DOORS into the foothills of the mountain.

MIMIR'S HEAD
So, lad... excited to finally see the land of the Giants?

ATREUS
Yeah. But also sad the journey's almost over.

They approach one of SINDRI'S SHOPS. A GEAR WHEEL rolls into frame. Atreus stops it with his foot, and it clanks to the ground. In the direction it came from, Sindri is toiling distractedly at a workbench on GONDOLA PARTS.

SINDRI
(noticing them)
Ah! Don't go anywhere—be with you in two shakes.

ATREUS
Father, can I tell him?

KRATOS
No.

SINDRI
Tell me what? Did you put this wheel in your mouth?
Oh god, I'll vomit, I'm not kidding, I'll throw up on it...

KRATOS
(shooting Atreus a warning look)
It is nothing. A family matter.

SINDRI
Oh... I can tell you a thing or two about family matters...

ATREUS
Let me guess... your brother isn't as talented as you,
and his work is junk.

SINDRI
Uh... those things are accurate. Your point?

ATREUS
It's all you ever talk about, over and over. Do something
about it or shut up already.

As Atreus speaks, the sky grows suddenly gray, and the distant rumble of a STORM is heard.

SINDRI
I see...

ATREUS
Yeah! We're sick of hearing about little people's little problems!

Lighting and Thunder CRASH, and just like that, the storm is upon them. Sindri and Kratos exchange a concerned look.

SINDRI
(wounded)
Umm... alright... That hurt a little. Let's have a look at your gear then.

Sindri walks them to his nearby CAMPFIRE WORKSHOP in awkward silence.

For the first time, Atreus doesn't have a conversation with Sindri as he upgrades Kratos' gear. The silence is tense and uncomfortable, and what remarks Sindri does make are aggressively wounded.

As they walk away, heading up the hills—

KRATOS
Why did you speak to the dwarf like that?

ATREUS
Aren't you sick of hearing about him and his brother?

KRATOS
Of course. But it serves nothing to make an enemy of him.

ATREUS
He should know the truth. Even if it hurts.

KRATOS
It was needless and unkind.

ATREUS
Truth is more important than kindness.

KRATOS

Your mother would disagree.

ATREUS
She wasn't a god.

Kratos is speechless. Soon after that, as they ascend further—

ATREUS
Why don't you let me carry her up from here?

KRATOS
No.

ATREUS
Why not? We're almost there. You know I can handle it!

KRATOS
Can you? After the way you spoke of her, I question that.

ATREUS
What, that she wasn't a god?

KRATOS
She was better than a god—and you shall not dishonor her.

ATREUS
Fine. Carry her yourself.

EXT. FOOTHILLS/STONE STAIRS (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

As they work their way up the "black breath" stairs—

ATREUS
Mimir... if you knew all along that we were gods, why come up with that story about Odin trying to follow us to Jötunheim before we get there, or whatever? Isn't it a lot simpler if they want us dead because we're gods, and they think we're a threat?

MIMIR'S HEAD
I suppose we can't rule it out. But Odin's ways are subtle and his purposes are—

ATREUS
Ugh, enough about Odin and his whole stupid family.

On the last crack-climb before the top—

ATREUS
You and mother always said all gods were evil... but *we're* not! Týr wasn't. Freya neither. The Aesir gods - that's who's evil. And you know what—Odin's right. We *are* a threat. Cause we know what they are, and we know we can beat them.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Well, not all of them. Not yet.

ATREUS
Magni did his worst, and he's dead. They're no better than us. And they're gonna be sorry they picked this fight.

INT. MOUNTAIN/STAG ROOM (MIDGARD) – DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Inside the Mountain door, KRATOS and ATREUS approach the Stag Statue— and there, just in front of the CHASM, is MODI. Except he doesn't look like we last saw him—beaten within an inch of his life, he is almost unrecognizable under layers of BRUISES and BLOOD. He steadies himself against a pillar. He talks through bruised, swollen lips—labored.

MODI
Thor... blamed me... ME... for what you did to Magni. My own father called me a coward...

ATREUS
Looks like he did more than *that.* Move it or we'll pick up where he left off.

MODI
I'll kill you—!

Modi takes a step towards Atreus but his legs give out. He collapses, helpless.

MODI (CONT'D)
Aah!! Aah... aah...

The boy walks up to the struggling Modi, looking down at the pitiful sight. Modi looks up, sadness and defeat in his face.

Atreus unsheathes the KNIFE his father gave him, and looks over his shoulder at Kratos for permission.

KRATOS
No. He is beaten—not worth killing.

ATREUS
He should pay for what he said about mother.

KRATOS
I said no.

ATREUS
But we're gods. We can do whatever we want.

Modi suddenly starts CHUCKLING from the floor.

MODI
Hehehehe... that's what I said to your mother... right before I *gave* it to her.

Before Kratos can even react, Atreus expertly STABS Modi in the throat. DARK BLOOD gushes out.

Kratos pulls the boy off Modi.

KRATOS
What are you doing?!

Modi GURGLES something unintelligible as he crawls desperately towards the edge of the chasm.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
(non-chalantly)
This is a *much* better knife than mother's.

Atreus turns away from Kratos and, without a word, KICKS Modi clean over the edge, into the chasm below.

Kratos grabs him by the shoulders.

KRATOS
You killed against my wishes. You lost control.

ATREUS
Haven't you been teaching me to kill?

KRATOS
I have been teaching you to *survive.* We are gods, boy... and that makes us a target. From now until the end of days, you are marked. So I teach you to kill, yes... but in defense of yourself. Never as an indulgence.

ATREUS
Nobody cared about him anyways. What's the difference?

KRATOS
There are consequences to killing a god.

Atreus wrenches himself free of his father's grip.

ATREUS
Why? How do *you* know?

Kratos doesn't answer.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
How do you know!?

This severe of a challenge from his boy leaves Kratos at a loss. He responds in his most familiar mode, *threateningly*.

KRATOS
Watch your tone, boy.

ATREUS
Whatever.

Atreus shakes his head and jogs up the trail, leaving his father behind.

Kratos stares at Atreus running off, no longer seeing innocence in the boy—only the worst of himself—and it crushes him.

After a time of tense silence, as they climb—

KRATOS
Keep your wits about you, boy. If Modi found us, Baldur cannot be far.

ATREUS
Good. I have a few words for him too...

KRATOS
No, you do not. You will leave him to me.

ATREUS
So you can kill him. Cause that's what we do to our enemies. RIGHT? Cause he'd do the same to us?

KRATOS
I will do only what is necessary.

ATREUS
And I'll help.

KRATOS
NO.

INT. MOUNTAIN/MINE (MIDGARD) – DAY (CONTINUOUS)

On walking through gate into the CLAW room—

ATREUS
Oh yeah, *this* room. But we need a new way up.

On approaching the (disabled) claw console—

KRATOS
Destroyed...

ATREUS
Even if we could take the cart up, the next platform broke when we fought the dragon. Did you already forget?

During combat, Atreus is no longer obedient, attacks unpredictably, and is conspicuously quiet when he should be helpful. For the first time, he becomes an unreliable partner in battle. He still kicks ass, but not in the way the player commands him.

After killing the final enemy on this level—

KRATOS
Have you forgotten your training?

ATREUS
Oh, are you talking to me? Thought you didn't like my *tone*.

After burning off the brush obstructing the express lift and activating it—

ATREUS
I can't learn if you won't teach me.

KRATOS
You do not heed my lessons.

ATREUS
I've done everything you asked, and all I wanted was the truth.

Nothing.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Where did you get your fire blades?

Nothing.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Why did you hide them?

Nothing.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
You said there are consequences to killing a god. You used the blades to kill one?

Nothing.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Who else did you kill, before Magni? How many?

Nothing.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Do you hear me?

KRATOS
(a little too firmly)
I heard you, and these are not subjects for discussion. Do not push me, boy.

ATREUS
Fine.
(to Mimir's Head)
Mimir, guess what. I know everything I need to know now. I have nothing else to learn.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Uh... congratulations?

They ride the rest of the way up in silence.

INT/EXT. MOUNTAIN/ SUMMIT (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

The lift arrives at the top, leaving them in the midst of a pack of unsuspecting, dormant Draugr. Rather than pause to allow Kratos a moment to strategize, Atreus leaps into combat.

As they near the top of the mountain, Atreus grows angrier and more "old" Kratos in his dispatching of enemies. Kratos can only watch the boy slide further down the path he doesn't want for him.

After a long stretch of cold silence, on a crack-climb up to the peak, Mimir can take no more—

MIMIR'S HEAD
Come ON, you two...the silence is getting unnerving.

ATREUS
Don't worry about it. We're focusing.

24. REMATCH

EXT. MOUNTAIN/ SUMMIT (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Upon reaching the Bifröst henge—

KRATOS
Boy, the rune.

Atreus pulls out his HUNTING KNIFE and unflinchingly cuts his own hand. Using his own BLOOD, the boy draws the BLACK RUNE from memory in the correct place on the henge-plate.

ATREUS
Carve along that.

The player must use the Chisel on this pattern to carve the Black Rune into the activation stone.

There is a FANFARE OF COLORS & SPECTACLE as the BIFRÖST BRIDGE begins to open.

An image forms through the henge— a BRIDGE, leading across to the FOUR-FINGERED PEAK they'd previously only glimpsed.

ATREUS
Wow. Jötunheim. We made it.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Beautiful, isn't it? Why, I remember once—

Before he can complete the thought, all the blood drains out of Mimir's face.

MIMIR'S HEAD (CONT'D)
Brother! Look ou—

Kratos quickly spins, but WHAM!

BALDUR CRASHES into him—RAMMING him into one of the gate's pillars causing it to crack while large chunks of ROCK to fall from above. The force of the attack is so explosive, it knocks Atreus off his feet.

BALDUR
Miss me?

Baldur lands a HAYMAKER on Kratos' face, causing more ROCKS to fall from above. Kratos tries to counter, but he's off balance and his target is too close.

A large STONE SHARD falls from above, landing inches from Baldur. Another CHUNK OF STONE drops— but this one Baldur catches, quickly SMASHING it into Kratos' face, stunning him. Baldur takes the opportunity to grab the stone shard next to him, and IMPALES Kratos with it through the side of his abdomen, spearing him to the gate pillar and causing HUGE CRACKS to spider-web up it.

Baldur continues the assault, cocking his fist back for a left hook. But Kratos, shaking off the last attack, catches the punch with his right hand in a vise-like grip. Baldur reacts by using his other hand to shove the shard in deeper into Kratos' gut. Kratos grimaces, but manages to grab ahold of the stone shard and resist it going in deeper. They are locked in a life-or-death tug-of-war.

KRATOS
(pained, to Atreus)
Run, boy! Cross the bridge!

Several ARROWS fly in from off-screen, striking Baldur in the back and shoulder, but having no effect.

ATREUS
No! I'm a god too! I can do this!
(to Baldur)
Get off him!

Atreus moves into point-blank range. He lets loose one more arrow striking Baldur through the left cheek, piercing his right, and hanging in his mouth.

BALDUR
(mouth full)
Really?

Baldur CHOMPS the arrow in his mouth to pieces and spits it out. In one quick motion, Baldur backhands the boy, sending him flying backward and to the ground in a daze. He rips the other arrows out of his body, and resumes pinning Kratos.

Kratos SMASHES down on the end of the stone shard protruding from his stomach, greatly shortening it so he can push himself off. He tries to follow up with a massive right fist, but Baldur is too quick. He DUCKS the punch and lands one of his own—right into the open wound in Kratos' midsection.

Kratos doubles over from the pain, and Baldur is relentless. He STOMPS the back of Kratos' leg, dropping the big man to his knees. Kratos tries to rise, but Baldur PUNCHES him back down.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Baldur. Let 'em go. Take me instead. I'll do whatever you—

Baldur STOMPS his foot into Mimir's face, bouncing him around Kratos' belt.

BALDUR
(to Mimir)
Shut up.

Baldur begins PUMMELING the back of Kratos' head, shouting at him as he does—

BALDUR (CONT'D)
All this time, I thought I needed *you*! But, you're just meat! Turns out the boy is the brains!

In the distance, Atreus can be seen picking himself up off the stone ground.

KRATOS
(filled with rage)
RAAAAAA!

Kratos SMASHES BACK with his head, landing a blow right into Baldur's face. He follows with a SPINNING ELBOW, catching Baldur across the chin, throwing him off-balance. Kratos picks Baldur up, and with a MASSIVE HEAVE, throws him into the gate pillar. The stone EXPLODES on impact as the pillar finally gives way. The entire gate CRUMBLES, CRASHING down with an explosive FLASH OF LIGHT.

ATREUS
NO!!!!

DEBRIS falls on top of Kratos and Baldur, as a big CLOUD OF DUST envelops them.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
You broke the gate! That was our only way to Jötunheim!

Kratos pushes a large BOULDER off his chest and staggers to his feet. Nearby, Baldur slowly rises.

BALDUR
Oh, you stupid son of a bitch!

Kratos ignores the taunt and addresses his son—

KRATOS
Get out of here, boy!

BALDUR
Yes... by all means, junior, run away. Let daddy do all the heavy lifting for you.

Atreus SNARLS and charges at the Aesir god. Kratos intercepts him.

ATREUS
(lashing out with anger)
Let GO!!!

KRATOS
Calm DOWN, boy! You are NOT ready for this.

ATREUS
(full-on rage)
I AM ready!!!

Atreus shoves Kratos with everything he has. Kratos, instinctively responding to violence with more violence, shoves him back. Immediately, Kratos knows he's crossed a line.

KRATOS
(remorsefully)
Boy... I...

Not able to take it anymore, Atreus swiftly draws his BOW—

ATREUS
Þruma—!!

—and fires a SHOCK ARROW directly at his father, landing in his shoulder. The impact propels Kratos backwards, smashing him back into what's left of the gate and dropping him to a knee. He grimaces as electricity ripples through him.

After watching this scene play out, Baldur begins to SLOWLY CLAP.

BALDUR
And here I thought *my* family was fucked up...

Atreus loses it, and charges at Baldur with his knife. He vaults off a rock and Baldur catches him by the throat, holding him at arm's length. The boy futilely stabs Baldur's forearm, but he feels nothing.

KRATOS
(weakly)
No...

Baldur looks at the knife embedded in his forearm and LAUGHS.

BALDUR
Aww... your father is right boy. You are *far* from ready.
Now, would you be so kind as to hold this for me.

Baldur pulls the knife from his forearm and stabs it into the boy's shoulder. Atreus lets out a SCREAM. Baldur looks right at Kratos, smiles that damn, cocky smile again, and gives him a wave.

BALDUR (CONT'D)
Thank you.

Then he grabs Atreus with his free hand and pulls him up under one arm, carrying him like a rolled up sleeping bag. He turns and runs toward the edge of the mountain, and LEAPS OFF—

KRATOS
ATREUS!!

Kratos shakes off the effects of the electricity and forces himself to stand. Without a second thought, he races to the edge of the mountain and JUMPS AFTER THEM.

As the camera catches up to the plummeting Kratos, we see clearly below him—Baldur (still carrying Atreus) landing on the back of a huge DRAGON as it swoops upward and away from the mountain.

Kratos SLAMS into its fat, scaly tail, and holds on for dear life.

An elaborate ACTION SEQUENCE ensues. Kratos and Baldur fight atop the flying dragon. Kratos mortally wounds the dragon before falling onto the bridge of Týr's Temple. Baldur and Atreus fall through the dome of the Realm Travel Room.

KRATOS races into the room and sees BALDUR at the REALM TRAVEL TABLE. Baldur, having completed the sequence of locking in the BRIDGE destination, is removing his BIFRÖST from the table when he realizes there's a god bearing down on him. Kratos, not breaking his stride, SLAMS into him—pinning Baldur to the table.

Kratos looks over at the BRIDGE DOORS, as the inner and outer rings of the room make the slow, continuous rotation toward ASGARD. The SON lies on the other side of the table unconscious.

A GLOWING, SPECTRAL NEBULA of DUST swirls around the realm travel table like a growing TORNADO. Baldur recovers and pushes back enough to say—

BALDUR
Too late, it's locked in. When the bridge opens, the full weight of Asgard will crash down on you.

The room begins to RUMBLE and the ELECTRIC HUM fills the room. Baldur grabs Kratos' head and SLAMS it into the table.

BALDUR (CONT'D)
It's over.

The inner and outer rings of the room continue their rotation past the ALFHEIM BRIDGE DOOR.

Baldur tries for another slam, but Kratos reverses the attempt.

KRATOS
Is it?

This time, it's Kratos' turn to SLAM Baldur's head into the realm travel table. He does it with so much force, the table SHUDDERS and Baldur is dazed for a moment.

Kratos tosses Baldur aside, and, in an act of desperation, pulls out his own BIFRÖST...

KRATOS (CONT'D)
So be it.

... and JAMS it into the table's POWER RECEPTACLE.

It won't slide in.

The boy finally stirs and lets out a small MOAN, but Baldur is back on his feet first—leaping onto Kratos' back and choking him from behind. Baldur places both feet on the realm travel table and pushes with everything he's got, arching his back while trying to separate Kratos from the table. It doesn't work.

The inner and outer rings of the room continue their rotation past the BROKEN JÖTUNHEIM BRIDGE DOOR.

The boy pulls the HUNTING KNIFE from his shoulder as he STANDS and moves toward them.

SON
Baldur!

KRATOS
(labored)
NO! You need to listen to me!

SON
Let me help!

Baldur loops his other arm under Kratos', trying to pull it away from the Bifröst as he continues his choke hold.

BALDUR
(whispers, to Kratos)
Let go of it or I kill him. You know I will.

Kratos lets out a ROAR through clenched teeth, and the PUSHES DOWN HARD on his Bifröst. The receptacle gives way and the Bifröst locks in.

The LIGHT SHOW DIMS. The ELECTRIC HUM turns into a sickening STATIC. The temple itself RUMBLES and GROANS. Jamming a different Bifröst into the table with a previous sequence locked in is clearly NOT something you're supposed to do.

The inner and outer rings of the room continue their rotation to the HELHEIM BRIDGE DOOR.

BALDUR (CONT'D)
(horrified)
What did you do...?

ROOTS from the SPECTRAL TREE lift the TRAVEL CRYSTAL out of the center of the realm travel table and into place while other ROOTS lift the HELHEIM BRIDGE CRYSTAL into position.

The BEAM of PRISMATIC LIGHT shoots through the two crystals.

The malfunctioning Bifröst Bridge to Helheim bursts open in a brilliant FLASH OF LIGHT and SPARKS... then a VORTEX of swirling air. The whole room feels like it's in the middle of a tornado, debris blowing around everywhere. The open bridge is sucking in everything like a vacuum.

The boy grabs hold of the roots stretching toward the bridge as he's lifted off the ground by the vortex. Kratos, on the opposite side of the realm travel table, is pulled hard into it—lurching forward as the winds swirl around him. This causes Baldur, still on Kratos' back, to flip over him—flying through the spectral tree and toward the open bridge.

Baldur reaches out at the last moment and grabs the boy as he flies by. They disappear into the swirling Bifröst Bridge.

KRATOS
BOY!!

Kratos lets go of the table, and bounds off of it, rocketing into the open bridge.

EXT. SKY—SOARING—HELHEIM

They find themselves flung TWO AND A HALF MILES into the sky.

Kratos tumbles through the air in a 2-MILE ARC. Ahead of him, Baldur still has a grip on the boy as they break through a CLOUD LAYER. The boy reaches back toward his father and Kratos is able to grab his outstretched hand. Baldur responds by grabbing Kratos by the throat. This time, Kratos gets the upper hand, kicking Baldur away. The boy, no longer in Baldur's grip, flies through the air just ahead.

Kratos hangs onto his son as they descend through the cloud layer, tumbling towards the edges of Helheim City—what looks like a HARBOR filled with ANCIENT WAR SHIPS.

Suddenly they collide with a ruined TOWER that separates them. Kratos sees another tower ahead and tucks in to take a rough landing on a high platform. Where Atreus landed is unclear.

25. PAST HAUNTS

INT/EXT. HELHEIM DOCKS/THE TOWERS (HELHEIM) – NIGHT

Kratos stands up in pain, clutching his shoulder in the piercing cold. He's looks around. He's crashed into the second floor of a DILAPIDATED HEL TOWER. The air is a misty green.

KRATOS

BOY?

ATREUS (O.S.)

I'm here...

Kratos looks over at a nearby PILE OF DEBRIS. Atreus is trapped under it.

KRATOS

Stay still.

KRATOS angrily rips the DEBRIS off ATREUS.

Before Atreus can even scramble to his feet, Kratos kneels over him, clutching his arm and shouting forcefully in his face. It's the most outwardly aggressive we've seen Kratos with his son.

KRATOS (CONT'D)

You will LISTEN to me and not speak a word. I am your *father*—and you, boy, are not yourself. You are too quick to temper. You are rash, insubordinate, and out of control. This will not stand. You will honor your

KRATOS (CONT'D)

mother and abandon this path you have chosen. It is not too late...

He stops, hearing the sound of approaching danger. He pulls the boy to his feet.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
This discussion is far from over.

Atreus nods, looking confused and somewhat cowed by the outburst.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
We are here because of *you*, boy. Never forget that.

As they climb down the crumbling structure—

ATREUS
Wow, it's cold. This is Hel?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Not just Hel... worst place in Hel you could've put us.

It's the first time we've heard Mimir's Head be anything but sweet to the boy, underscoring the gravity of their situation. It just hangs in the air until Kratos speaks.

KRATOS
I see a ship.

In the distance, across a nearby dock, a DEATHLY SAILING SHIP looms.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Get us there. It only takes us halfway to Týr's Temple but at least it gets us far from here.

Traversing the Hel Towers, they hear SOMETHING STRANGE in the wind...

PHANTOM ATREUS
(eerie, echoed)
He should pay for what he said about mother.

KRATOS
Boy?

ATREUS
(creeped out)
That... wasn't me.

A little further ahead, they walk into a room only to witness a strange sight: A PHANTOM VISION OF ATREUS standing over a PHANTOM VISION OF MODI. He's collapsed on the ground, bloody, beaten, and pitiful. The scene looks familiar.

The REAL ATREUS stands watching, almost hypnotized by the image.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
It *was* me...

He watches as the Phantom Son walks over to Phantom Modi, unsheathing his dagger.

PHANTOM ATREUS
But we're gods. We can do whatever we want.

KRATOS
Turn away, boy.

But his son is transfixed.

Phantom Modi suddenly starts CHUCKLING from the floor.

PHANTOM MODI
(eerie, echoed)
Hehehehe... that's what I said to your mother... right before I *gave* it to her.

As he did in the Mountain, the Phantom Son unsheathes his HUNTING KNIFE, and expertly STABS Phantom Modi. DARK BLOOD gushes from Phantom Modi's throat.

Atreus, watching the scene play out to the moment he kicks Phantom Modi clean off the edge—

ATREUS
That wasn't me. I couldn't have done that.

KRATOS
Do not dwell on those thoughts. Not here.

PHANTOM ATREUS then DISAPPEARS, leaving real Atreus staring into empty space.

As they crack-climb down one of the Hel Towers—

KRATOS
Head. What was that?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Not just the old and sick come to Helheim... so do the criminals. Hel must not draw a distinction between us and those whom these visions are meant to torture.

KRATOS
How do we stop it?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Escape Hel. As soon as possible.

ATREUS
I'm not gonna let it bother me. Like you said, Mimir—it was just an illusion. That wasn't me.

KRATOS
No. But it is who you have become of late.

ATREUS
Look, I know I got us into this. But I'll get us out... *whoever* I am.

KRATOS
I will get us out. You will follow orders.

ATREUS
But maybe that's not who I am.

KRATOS
It had better be. Now let me focus.

They continue navigating towards the SAILING SHIP in the distance.

As they cross a bridge from one Hel Tower to another, a figure can be seen through the broken wall.

ATREUS
(hushed)
Wait, I think I see Baldur up ahead...
KRATOS
(to Atreus)
Stay out of sight.

ATREUS
Listen...

Ahead, inside one of the Hel Towers, we see the "real" Baldur bearing witness to a moment from his own past. Before him is a PHANTOM VERSION of himself from the past, arguing with someone unseen.

PHANTOM BALDUR
(eerie, echoed)
No... no, I would never have wanted this! You had no right.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
(eerie, echoed)
I had every right. I am your mother.

PHANTOM BALDUR
You had no RIGHT, witch!!

As they get closer, they finally see who "Phantom Baldur" is addressing—FREYA.

PHANTOM BALDUR (CONT'D)
I can't taste. I can't smell. I can't even feel the temperature of this room. Feasting... drinking... women. It's all gone. Gone!

PHANTOM FREYA
But you will never have to feel pain again. Death has no power over you now. You would rather die?

PHANTOM BALDUR
Than never feel again? Yes. YES! I would rather die.

The real Baldur walks among the phantoms, watching the scene unfold, and periodically making useless efforts to influence the memory—

BALDUR
Yes...

PHANTOM BALDUR
Take it away, mother. Please...

PHANTOM FREYA
...I can't.

Phantom Baldur wraps one hand around the back of Freya's head, pulls her in close and holds the blade against her neck.

PHANTOM BALDUR
Please, please, take it away.
(starting to sob)
Oh, please...

PHANTOM FREYA
It doesn't work like that, son. Trust me, in time you will thank me. You will thank me.

Phantom Baldur stops his sobbing and turns threateningly towards his mother. Real Baldur knows what's coming next and cheers himself on.

PHANTOM BALDUR
No... I won't.

BALDUR
Yes... come on... come on...

PHANTOM BALDUR
You ruined my life.

PHANTOM FREYA
Honey, we can figure this out...

PHANTOM BALDUR (CONT'D)
No, not if you can't fix it, Mother.

Phantom Baldur put his hands around Phantom Freya's THROAT and pushes her down to her knees. He draws a KNIFE and holds it over his head. His muscles tense as if he's going to kill her, but he's clearly struggling with the idea.

BALDUR
(to Phantom Baldur)
Do it. DO IT!

PHANTOM FREYA
(eerie, echoed)
Son—

He tries... but Phantom Baldur can't bring himself to do it. He releases Freya with a SHOVE.

BALDUR
(to Phantom Baldur)
Coward!

PHANTOM BALDUR
I never want to see you again. Never.

Phantom Baldur walks away and disappears, leaving the real version staring—seething—at the illusion of his stunned mother. Real Baldur stalks toward Phantom Freya, wishing he could finish the job.

BALDUR (CONT'D)
(crying)
I'm a coward... I'm a worthless coward...

Kratos and Atreus climb down to the docks, leaving Baldur to his WAILING SOBS. As they climb down—

KRATOS
(confused & betrayed)
Freya is his mother. Why did you keep this from us, Head?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Would you believe it slipped m'mind?

KRATOS
I would not.

MIMIR'S HEAD
I'm at a loss. I assure you I've no reason to keep such a thing a secret.

KRATOS
There's the boat. We will speak more of this. Soon.

INT/EXT. HELHEIM DOCKS/THE HEL-BOAT (HELHEIM) – NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

After they finish clearing Hel-Walkers off the SAILING VESSEL DECK, a voice echoes through the air—

PHANTOM OLD MAN (O.S.)
(eerie, echoed)
Such chaos. I will have much to do after I kill you.

ATREUS
Who was that?

KRATOS
(worried)
We must hurry.

They board the vessel only to discover HEL TAR covering a large swath of RIGGING.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Er... not entirely sure this is seaworthy.

KRATOS
She will do.

Kratos uses the chain blades to set ablaze the HEL TAR, which catches fire and disappears.

ATREUS
Now what?

KRATOS
Give me space to work.

Kratos sets ablaze the mainstay lock section.

ATREUS
(contritely)
Let me help. What can I do?

KRATOS
(bitterly)
You have done enough.

Kratos turns the crank, and the sails begin to raise—

ATREUS
The sails are intact!

—and the ship begins to sail forward, through the air.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
We're moving!

MIMIR'S HEAD
Great. Just bear in mind—this boat can only take us part of the way. Týr's Temple is near the top of a tremendous waterfall which, sadly, we are downstream.

MIMIR'S HEAD (CONT'D)
That means even if we get there intact, we'd still need to sail UP a waterfall somehow.

ATREUS
The Vanir built the greatest ship that ever was and *it* can fly.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Skíðblaðnir? Yeh... because it was *designed* to fly. This was not.

KRATOS
Nevertheless, this is the boat we have. We make do.

The boat collides with a GIANT ICEBERG—

ATREUS
Owp! We're stuck. What now?

When the player Interacts with the latch, it starts an axe-chopping mini-game.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
(confused)
You're chopping it...?

MIMIR'S HEAD
(gruffly)
Give your father room.

The latch breaks apart, releasing the mainstay and untethering the sails from the main deck.

ATREUS
(still not understanding the plan)
So now the sails are loose...?

KRATOS
Just watch.

When the player returns to the crank and Interacts with it, Kratos pulls the now-untethered sails down so that the sails curve down to create a makeshift balloon.

ATREUS
You're pulling the sails down? But how they gonna catch the wind?

After Kratos frees the boat, it starts to float up—

ATREUS (CONT'D)
We're floating! The heat from the fires! We're actually floating! I can't believe it. You just made a huge sky lantern.

The mast collides with more nearby architecture—

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Aaaaand we're stuck again.

KRATOS
Not for long. Stay with the boat.

As Kratos crosses over to the TOWER STRUCTURE the ship is stuck on.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Our ship's lodged on this bridge. Sure I can't help?

KRATOS
(firmly, over his shoulder)
I said stay on the boat.

ATREUS
(disappointed)
Staying on the boat...

Once Kratos pulls the crank, the lodged bridge EXPLODES from the resistance, freeing the ship.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
(from rising boat)
That did it. We're loose!

KRATOS
(projected)
Wait for me there!

As Kratos tries to find a way up to where the sails are caught in the architecture—

MIMIR'S HEAD
We need to talk, brother. You do realize it's over, don't you? Even if we make it back to Midgard, you and

MIMIR'S HEAD (CONT'D)
Baldur destroyed the only gate to Jötunheim. We are out of options. And that boy up there... he's in nine kinds of pain. His head's turned so far around, he—

KRATOS
Atreus is not your concern.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Well, he might become everyone's concern if you don't do *something*. You don't have to be the smartest man in the world to see that.

Kratos stands where the edge of their SAILING SHIP is lodged under a TOWER BRIDGE. He looks over his shoulder to Atreus, who watches nearby.

KRATOS
(gesturing to dock)
Atreus.

Atreus eagerly rushes over to join his father.

ATREUS
I can help?

He positions himself next to his father.

KRATOS
Together now.

They PUSH with the strength of twenty trolls, and DISLODGE THE BOAT...

ATREUS
We did it. We're free.

...which resumes sailing across the cold Helheim skies.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
(determined)
We *are* going to get out of here.

PHANTOM YOUNG KRATOS (O.S.)
(eerie, echoed)
Face me, father. It is time to end this.

PHANTOM OLD MAN (O.S.)
(eerie, echoed)
Yes, my son. It is time.

KRATOS
(to himself, horrified)
No...

ATREUS
It's that voice again. Do you know who that is?

KRATOS
(distracted, dwelling)
I... do not know.

As the boat soars across Helheim, HEL-WALKERS jump down from passing architecture. As they fight Kratos, an occasional Hel-Walker breaks off to try and put out the magical fires keeping the boat aloft. Kratos must keep the fires lit, and dislodge HARPOONS from the hull, to keep the boat aloft.

As Kratos stands on the deck of the boat, a THICK FOG begins to envelop the area. He watches as WISPS of ETHEREAL CLOUD waft past him.

ZEUS (O.S.)
(eerie, echoed)
It is time, my son. Look around at what you have done.

Kratos turns, following the floating mist as it drifts to the deck of the boat and SOLIDIFIES into an OLD MAN with a WHITE BEARD and GLOWING WHITE EYES. Fans of the series will recognize him as ZEUS. He is collapsed on the ground, bloody, beaten, and pitiful.

Another FIGURE MATERIALIZES—a PHANTOM KRATOS, younger, dressed in his GREEK ATTIRE from GOD OF WAR 3. He throws down one CHAIN BLADE, then the other, and RUSHES Zeus.

The camera aligns to Phantom Young Kratos' POV as he grabs Zeus by the throat, lifts him up into the air, and SLAMS him to the floor. He punches him several times, following up with a knee to the face. More punches, and then a slam of the head against stone. Blood splatters with every punch. Kratos punches him, over, and over, and over again, and doesn't stop. It's brutal, unrelenting, and over the top—a god's rage made manifest.

The camera aligns to "real" Kratos' POV, observing the vicious phantom beat-down in profile, as Atreus watches it all from the other side. He's transfixed by the sheer brutality of it, horrified, not wanting to believe what he's seeing.

Then something offscreen catches his eye, and the boy's expression goes from horror to panic.

He rushes to Kratos, and shakes him, pulling him away from the vision.

ATREUS
Come on. We gotta go.

KRATOS
(reeling)
You saw...

ATREUS
There's no time! LOOK!

Kratos looks over his shoulder to see the familiar sight of the TEMPLE STATUE OF TÝR—directly in the path of the flying boat, with no time or means to avoid the inevitable. The boat CRASHES into the statue, taking so much damage the vessel begins to BREAK APART. Kratos and Atreus, knocked off their feet, see the REALM TRAVEL TEMPLE below as the boat buckles.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
I have a plan!

He grabs his father's arm.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
JUMP!!

Kratos and Atreus LEAP off the flying boat to the Realm Travel Temple below.

They land inside an ANTECHAMBER, and look up to see the boat as it CRASHES into the temple.

As Kratos and Atreus dust themselves off, Mimir's Head pipes up.

MIMIR'S HEAD
That was your plan? You're *both* cracked!

26. A NEW PATH

INT. TÝR'S TEMPLE/ODIN'S LIBRARY (HELHEIM) – NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

As the dust settles after the crash—

KRATOS
We are leaving this realm. NOW.

ATREUS
As long as we didn't wreck our way back...

Their path takes them to a series of hidden rooms under the dome, revealed by the destruction.

ATREUS
What is this place?

MIMIR'S HEAD
This is Odin's. I'd recognize his atrocious taste anywhere.

Atreus picks up a SCROLL and opens it—

ATREUS
I think this is where Odin brought all his best clues about Jötunheim!

Pushing open another large set of DOORS, something in the distance catches the boy's eye.

ATREUS
Look at that! It's the missing panel, about Týr...

Atreus runs over to the SHRINE PANEL begins to draw in his JOURNAL as he speaks. It's the central panel that was missing from the Triptych in Týr's Vault.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Odin must have stolen it. But why?

MIMIR'S HEAD
He always has his reasons. Might I have a look?

Kratos lifts up Mimir's Head to examine the panel. It's a sparse and puzzling image of Týr standing suspended over a CHASM, formed but what resembled a truncated tree branch. The metallic Týr figure has his arm outstretched, palm up, hand empty.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Well... this is most unexpected.

ATREUS
Why? What does it mean?

MIMIR'S HEAD
I haven't the foggiest. But, clearly that's Týr... travelling, somehow, perhaps magically. But what's that to do with the Giants, that they should devote a shrine to it? I'm afraid that is none too clear.

ATREUS
What are those runes in the corners?

He points to some symbols we may recognize... Celtic, Egyptian, Japanese, and a familiar Greek OMEGA.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Not runes. Symbols... from different lands. They mean—

KRATOS
War.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Aye.

ATREUS
How do you...?

Kratos indicates the Omega symbol in the upper right corner.

KRATOS
This one I know too well.

An awkward silence hangs in the air. Kratos breaks it, stepping closer to the panel and pointing at the figure representing Týr—

KRATOS
(to Mimir's Head)
His eyes. They are jewels. Like yours.

MIMIR'S HEAD
No doubt signifying the gift of sight the Giants granted us... Give me a closer look.

Kratos raises Mimir's head up to the metal depiction of Týr.

MIMIR'S HEAD (CONT'D)
Interesting...

Mimir squints his one good eye as he inspects the triptych. As he does, the GOLDEN LIGHT Kratos and Atreus saw once before ERUPTS from Mimir's eye. It strikes the jewel in Týr's "eye."

Suddenly, the panel ACTIVATES, as light surges through it causing new images to appear.

MIMIR'S HEAD (CONT'D)
Very interesting.

In Týr's formerly empty hand now appears a radiant object, shaped not unlike a KEY ORB ENTRY STONE. A bridge of light forms across the chasm, beneath Týr's feet. A rune representing Jötunheim lights up. An image begins to appear at the base of the panel. It's a diagram of an ORNATE KEY. Atreus quickly copies it into his Journal.

ATREUS
What is *that!?*

MIMIR'S HEAD
Secret plans, concealed by Týr so none could access but him... and those few others the Giants trusted. And right under Odin's nose—ho-ho! I did promise I'd get you to Jötunheim...

KRATOS
What do you mean, head? You said we were out of options.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Don't you see, brother? Odin never gave up hope, and neither should we. He knew there was a clue in here, but *we're* the ones who found it. These plans are for a

MIMIR'S HEAD (CONT'D)
key to some chamber Týr's kept hidden. I don't know where it's leading us or what we'll find... but it's a *path.*

Atreus spins around to watch his father, as if concerned this pivot will be the last straw. He is relieved when Kratos lifts up the head again to ask—

KRATOS
How do we make this key?

MIMIR'S HEAD
I suggest we ask a dwarf.

As Kratos and Atreus walk away from the panel—

ATREUS
That symbol on the temple door... it's a bunch of runes together. Peace. Unity. Hope, other things too.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Týr's own design. He made this door himself.

As they ride a LIFT down to the Realm Travel Room, Kratos can't quite face his son, and asks over his shoulder—

KRATOS
Boy...

Atreus turns around.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Before... what you... saw...

ATREUS
I didn't see anything.

KRATOS
You did not see me with someone? An old man?

ATREUS
What old man?

He's lying. We can tell, and Kratos can too...

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Can we go?

...but it's as far as Kratos is comfortable pushing it.

KRATOS
Yes... very well.

INT. TÝR'S TEMPLE/REALM TRAVEL ROOM (HELHEIM/MIDGARD) – NIGHT/DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Upon activating Realm Travel to Midgard—

KRATOS
Now, head—why did you not tell us Baldur is the son of Freya?

MIMIR'S HEAD
He IS! It's shocking every time I hear it and yet obviously I know it. But when I think about Baldur and Freya, I...

Mimir trails off.

ATREUS
Mimir?

MIMIR'S HEAD
(a blank slate)
Yes, lad?

Kratos emits a rare CHUCKLE.

KRATOS
Freya.

MIMIR'S HEAD
How's that, brother?

KRATOS
Head, tell me Baldur's vulnerability.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Baldur is blessed with invulnerability to all threats, physical or magical.

ATREUS
Wait, what is happening?

KRATOS
He is bewitched not to speak of what he knows.

MIMIR'S HEAD
I am? I AM! Ooh...that's it precisely. I wonder how long that's been so—since she had my head at her mercy, or back when I figured out Baldur's weakness...

ATREUS
Mimir!

MIMIR'S HEAD
Yes, lad?

ATREUS
You just said you figured out Baldur's weakness!

MIMIR'S HEAD
Did I? But Baldur is blessed with invulnerability to all threats, physical or magical.

KRATOS
Enough. This means there is a way. If he troubles us again, we *will* find it.

INT. TÝR'S TEMPLE/BROK'S SHOP (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

KRATOS and ATREUS approach BROK at his SHOP. Kratos holds ATREUS' JOURNAL up to Brok's face, who squints at the drawing of the ORNATE KEY.

KRATOS
Can you make it?

BROK
Is it a weapon? Armor? Or likewise an instrument of war of which I'm a master at shapin'? No? Then forget it. Even if I wanted to make such an insignificant gewgaw, I'm liable to chink my tools working on something so delicate and ladylike.

SINDRI (O.S.)
Then shingle it.

They all turn around and see Sindri standing just a few feet away holding his WORK BAG.

SINDRI (CONT'D)
Pattern weld the item with skap slag. Keep the layers thin, alternate the overlay.

Brok stares at his brother, and a leer forms.

BROK
Okay, smart guy. And where d'ya propose to find a lump of quality skap slag? Last time I saw one, I could still get rigid down south.

Sindri reaches into his pocket and pulls out a hunk of SHINY SLAG and holds it up. Brok GASPS.

BROK (CONT'D)
(astonished)
Shut your mouth. Is that...? Where did you...?

SINDRI
I had to get my hands dirty.

Sindri gags slightly. Brok stares at him a moment, then starts laughing.

BROK
Well, don't just stand there—let's do this!

SINDRI
What? You? You're fine with working on something that's not a weapon?

BROK
Ah hell... why not?

Sindri and Atreus look at Brok like he's an alien.

BROK (CONT'D)
What? I can grow too...

The brothers crowd around Brok's portable smelting furnace with their backs to us, hammering away.

Atreus watches with obvious glee, happy to see the two brothers finally working together. He looks up at his father who watches stone-faced. He tries not to let it bring him down.

SINDRI
Here it is!

Sindri holds up the ORNATE KEY with pride—a combination of both their styles. Brok turns back to his smelting furnace and pulls out a BRANDING IRON with a GLOWING TIP.

BROK
Nope! Don't forget this!

Together, Brok and Sindri brand the KEY with a HISS. As they lay it on the counter in front of Atreus, a big smile crosses the boy's face.

BROK (CONT'D)
Oh, quit yer grinning. It's downright unsettling.

ATREUS
It's just nice to see you together. But... now the rune on your brand looks different.

BROK
(shrugs)
Price of reforging something what broke.

SINDRI
(admiring the brand)
I like the new one better, don't you?

KRATOS
(taking the item)
We have work to do.

Kratos walks away. Before following, Atreus shrugs and gives them a look of "whaddya gonna do?"

Brok extends his hand to Sindri for a handshake. Sindri ALMOST manages to bring himself to touch it. Brok gets bored of waiting and waves it off.

BROK
(*"why I oughta..."*)
Ohhhh...

Lingering further—

SINDRI
Something else we can do for you?

ATREUS
Nah, just... glad you guys worked it out.

SINDRI
Ah. Well... I could say the same to you.

ATREUS
I guess I was getting a bit full of myself.

ATREUS
I'm sorry for how I spoke to you, Sindri. You forgive me?

SINDRI
Already have. Like you said, it all worked out. Now let us get back to work before I get... sentimental...

INT/EXT. LAKE OF NINE AND OTHER "LORE" ZONES (MIDGARD) - DAY

While on the road—

ATREUS
I'm confused. I always heard that Baldur's mother was Frigg.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Aye, Frigg... well, that's more of a pet name, you see. It means, "beloved." Something Odin called Freya after they wed. Out of affection, at first, or so I like to believe. As things turned sour, it became a way to manipulate the truth.

ATREUS
How so?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Odin didn't want Freya, a Vanir goddess, getting credit for anything in Asgard. So anything worthy she accomplished was attributed to Frigg.

ATREUS
Like being Baldur's mother.

MIMIR'S HEAD
(remembering it anew, again)
That's RIGHT—Freya was Baldur's mother all along!

Atreus SIGHS.

While on the road—

ATREUS
Mimir? Why do you have Bifröst crystals in your eyes?

MIMIR'S HEAD

A loving gift from the Giants. Since I used to do so much traveling between realms, they thought it would be more convenient for me than having a crystal I could lose.

ATREUS
Did it hurt?

MIMIR'S HEAD
No, because I wisely fortified myself with sixteen cups of billow maidens' ale. Got so inebriated I tried convincing the Giants to put 'em in my nipples instead!
(laughing too much)
Almost talked them into it too... Can you imagine? Mimir of the Bifröst teats! Those were the days...

ATREUS
Ewww.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Okay, okay... I'll stop now.

27. TÝR'S TESTS

EXT/INT. TÝR'S TEMPLE/TÝR'S SECRET CHAMBER (MIDGARD) - DAY

Our heroes locate an ORNATE DOOR on the outskirts of the Temple Dome, now exposed by the lower water line.

KRATOS
Týr's rune. This is it.

Inserting the ORNATE KEY crafted by the Huldra Brothers into the lock, it turns with a CLICK, and Kratos throws open the doors and they walk in.

Kratos and Atreus enter into a small antechamber at the foot of a small staircase.

ATREUS
We're inside! But... what *is* this place?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Your guess is as good as mine, little brother.

After crossing the Bifröst bridge, Kratos and Atreus are met with a confusing sight.

ATREUS
The tree! We're underneath the realm travel room!
But... why is the floor on the ceiling?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Those realm doors seem to mirror the ones above...

Kratos notices a GLOWING SPHERE suspended in the air—

KRATOS
Up there. Týr used the same magic to protect the Black Rune. The clue we seek may be inside.

ATREUS
Hunh — right next to the Jötunheim door!

MIMIR'S HEAD
Interesting... but can we reach it?

KRATOS
Not from here.

Suddenly the large "Jötunheim" door swings open, along with a simpler, smaller door they can actually reach, leading across a Bifröst bridge to another area.

ATREUS
Oh! What's behind there?

They find a small door leading to a secret passageway behind the outer wall. As they descend a staircase within—

MIMIR'S HEAD
Well! One inner sanctum within another...

ATREUS
Those tapestries... looks like more Giant art... Whatever Týr did for them must have been big.

Kratos approaches a PLATFORM attached to the outer wall of the realm travel room. A RUNE looms before him.

KRATOS
Boy... this is the rune for Jötunheim?

ATREUS
That's right... and look —

Camera tilts up — the GLOWING SPHERE is visible through a window just above the rune.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
...we're on the other side of the door.

KRATOS
The upside-down door...

ATREUS
What are you thinking?

Kratos has an idea.

KRATOS
Stand back.

ATREUS
Ooo-kay.

A Use interact appears. Repeated mashing causes Kratos to attempt to lift up the platform, rotating the entire inner temple with it.

As the temple begins to budge—

ATREUS
It's moving!

MIMIR'S HEAD
What's moving?

ATREUS
Everything!

Kratos lifts the temple ring with everything he has—

KRATOS
RAAAAAA!

—but he soon realizes the temple is tied down with ENORMOUS CHAINS.

As the camera zooms in on the chains—

MIMIR'S HEAD
Extraordinary. The whole room is built on some kind of *axle*.

Camera swings around to show other set of chains.

ATREUS
There's chains on both sides. Without those...

As the camera pulls back out—

KRATOS
...we can flip the temple.

Kratos drops the temple with a CRASH. Kratos turns the crank to start the lift down.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Hm... not *sure* what happens when we recklessly upend a room that's rooted to eight other realms. I'm curious, of course... but it's a leap to imagine it gets us to Jötunheim.

ATREUS
I don't mind a leap.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Well...who knows— perhaps you and Týr are the same kind of mad.

Atreus runs to one edge of the lift, noticing what seems like a small army in a large pit. Kratos overlooks the ledge—

KRATOS
An army... of statues?

MIMIR'S HEAD
I don't think they're the kind that come to life, if that's what you're worried about. Týr often said in the world of peace he envisioned, the only soldiers he'd need would be statues. Bless his heart, but the bugger did take himself rather seriously, didn't he?

Kratos spies the chains—

KRATOS
There... where the chains meet. We must find a way around.

As they approach yet another hallway in Týr's temple filled with murder devices—

MIMIR'S HEAD
Again with the death traps!

Atreus starts to crawl into the small passage to the left of the crushers.

MIMIR'S HEAD
I had a thought, brother... why don't you let the lad carry me for a while?

KRATOS
And let you miss this? No.

Kratos and Atreus, finally reach the room with the first ENORMOUS CHAIN.

ATREUS
The chain! We made it!

With his bare hands, Kratos rends apart the coupler binding the chains. Kratos and Atreus are immediately attacked, as a flamethrower trap rises from the ground.

They make their way to the second chain, overcoming more traps and fighting through waves of additional enemies.

After shattering the second chain—

KRATOS
Time to flip the temple.

ATREUS
Yes SIR!

MIMIR'S HEAD
Let's just agree to stop saying "flip the temple"—it's starting to sound *normal*.

As the lift returns to the level with the statues...

MIMIR'S HEAD
Brothers... I know what I promised, but in case this doesn't work, just remember—Týr had good cause to create these obstacles. He's kept Jötunheim out of Odin's reach, but the world is hardly at peace.

ATREUS
No... but it's got *hope*. We're all working together now... we have *unity*. That's what the rune on the door to this place was telling us. We're on Týr's path.

Kratos approaches the PLATFORM attached to the outer wall of the realm travel room. On interaction with the outer ring, Kratos begins to lift—

MIMIR'S HEAD
Lift with your legs, brother.

ATREUS
He knows.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Just trying to be helpful.

Kratos lifts the temple ring with everything he has—

KRATOS
RAAAAAA!

With a final heave, the entire temple flips over—a gigantic sphere, rotating on its axis, until platforms collide and stop the rotation with a ground-shaking THUD.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Bloody outstanding!
As they climb back up to the realm travel room—

ATREUS
See that, Mimir? Nobody could do all this alone. All these obstacles... they're just chances to prove we're the ones who can beat them. We may argue...me and father, you and Freya, Brok and Sindri... but when we all work together, we *do* make a good team... and that's Týr's test. That's why we're gonna make it to Jötunheim.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Do you hear that, brother? Lad's found his equilibrium.

ATREUS
What's *that* mean?

KRATOS
He means you speak wisely, Atreus. And that is good to hear.

INT. TÝR'S TEMPLE/REALM TRAVEL ROOM (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Kratos swings open the door to the inverted Realm Travel Room. The GLOWING SPHERE is visible across the room—a line of sight made open by the absence of the Tree. Otherwise the room appears just like the Realm Travel Room as seen so far.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Ha! I guess the Temple *was* made to be flipped.

ATREUS
Look, the tree's upside down! Or... are we? I'm not sure anymore.

Kratos inspects the sphere— a force field containing the Black Rune, with a DISPEL LOCK MASK.

KRATOS
Boy, your knife.

Atreus steps forward, drawing his knife. He stabs it into the MOUTH of the STONE FACE and twists.

ATREUS
(whispers)
Dreifa.

It glows for a second and the MAGICAL BARRIER disappears. Kratos reaches down and picks up the revealed TALISMAN.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Well? What've we got?

KRATOS
Some sort of travel stone.

With the talisman in his left hand, Kratos holds Mimir's Head out in his right to have a better look.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Let me see...

Mimir's eye widens in recognition.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Great *Auðumbla's* udders—that's the Unity Stone!

KRATOS
You know it?

MIMIR'S HEAD
I wasn't sure it existed! If Týr possessed this, that explains how he could visit all the realms, and other lands, to boot.

KRATOS
He held this. In the panel in Odin's library.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Yes... Yes! That's it—I understand now. It showed Týr walking the Realm Between Realms. You know how you must never stray from the path? Well, Týr always followed his *own* path, if you catch my meaning.

KRATOS
The Realm Between Realms...

Kratos pockets the talisman and returns Mimir to his hip.

EXT. REALM BETWEEN REALMS

As they step into the Realm Between Realms—

MIMIR'S HEAD
If you're thinking about hurling us all into the void, I hope you're quite sure.

ATREUS
Wasn't it your idea? Find our own path, right?

MIMIR'S HEAD
(quietly, resigned)
Bollocks...

Atreus sprints over to the edge of the precipice and waits. Kratos peers over the edge, and takes out the UNITY STONE...

KRATOS
This is where Týr stepped beyond... and the Unity Stone protected him.

...then looks behind to his Son.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Ready?

ATREUS
Ready.

Atreus climbs onto his father's back.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Well... if this is it, lads, it's been an honor.

KRATOS
Have faith, Head.

They step off the edge and begin a rapid (but reassuringly controlled) descent through a SWIRL OF OTHERWORLDLY COLORS. Shortly after the fall begins—

ATREUS
(shouting)
This is incredible!

Kratos lands in a crouch, and Atreus rolls out safely with a fairly skillful somersault. They see before them a twisty path leading to the LOST TOWER OF JÖTUNHEIM.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Ach... how can I be so nauseous without a stomach?

ATREUS
Come on, that was great...!

KRATOS
Look...

ATREUS
The tower! I *knew* there was something down here...

MIMIR'S HEAD
Amazing. How do you hide something that exists in all realms? Cast it out of any realm to the space between. Clever old Týr.

KRATOS
But how do we use it?

MIMIR'S HEAD
I'd suggest we look inside. But stay alert—Týr's little challenges are never as simple as they appear.

KRATOS
I have noticed.

INT. JÖTUNHEIM TOWER (REALM BETWEEN REALMS) - CONTINUOUS

They enter the tower, and find it empty except for a PEDESTAL.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Well... this is sparse.

KRATOS
The pedestal...

On interacting with the pedestal, KRATOS places the talisman inside — where it DISAPPEARS — and magic is unleashed. The tower room begins to shake—and ultimately RISE.

ATREUS
Oh no! It took the stone!

MIMIR'S HEAD
The tower... it's absorbing the stone's energy...

ATREUS
Something's happening! Is it moving? It's moving!

MIMIR'S HEAD
It knows what to do. The stone served its purpose. We're fulfilling Týr's spell!

KRATOS
What happens now?

MIMIR'S HEAD
No idea, brother...but after that fall, I'm sure we're past the worst of it.

A bruising gauntlet of monsters begins to materialize.

MIMIR'S HEAD (CONT'D)
Oop! No, this is considerably worse.

With each realm the shifting tower passes through, our heroes face a new grueling wave of adversaries—not just Alfheim and Helheim but the fire realm of Muspelheim, and Niflheim of the poisonous mists.

Finally, the battle dies down, the sense of perpetual movement abates, and there's the sound of a locking-into-place. The Jötunheim rune by the exits LIGHTS as we have seen other realm runes light on the towers around the Lake of Nine.

ATREUS
We've stopped... I think it's over.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Aye... but where are we?

28. THE BELLY OF THE BEAST

EXT. TÝR'S BRIDGE/ JÖTUNHEIM TOWER (MIDGARD) – DAY (CONTINUOUS)

As Kratos pushes open the door to the JÖTUNHEIM TOWER, they watch the REALM TRAVEL BRIDGE swing into position and lock into place with the tower.

ATREUS
Look, we're back in Midgard! There's the bridge! We did it—the tower's back where it belongs!

KRATOS
Now Týr's travel room can take us to Jötunheim.

As they return to the REALM TRAVEL ROOM—

ATREUS
How did Týr *do* this?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Odin suspected the Giants secretly possessed some remnant of primordial Jötnar creative essence—the stuff all realms were made of. The Unity Stone must have been fashioned from that essence. To trust an outsider with it, even Týr, tells you just how desperate they were.

INT. TÝR'S TEMPLE/REALM TRAVEL ROOM (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

As they approach the REALM TRAVEL TABLE—

MIMIR'S HEAD
I don't know what we'll find when we get to Jötunheim, but we must cover our tracks. Odin's ravens will tell him of the tower's restoration, and we mustn't let our efforts be to his benefit.

KRATOS
Very well.

At the realm travel table, Kratos activates realm travel to Jötunheim—

ATREUS
(happily)
This is it. Here we go!

As the usual fireworks start to get underway—

MIMIR'S HEAD
Hold on, wait a minute... this isn't going to work.

KRATOS
What?

MIMIR'S HEAD
(noticing for the first time)
There's no travel crystal. Týr must have used his own eyes to refract the energy. It was his final failsafe.

ATREUS
But *you've* got eyes like him, Mimir.

MIMIR'S HEAD
I've got AN eye—one! Odin plucked out my other eye precisely to keep me from travelling.

A BIFRÖST BEAM shoots out from the Realm Travel Table, and strikes the receptacle with the missing travel crystal. The whole process whimpers out abruptly.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Sorry, lads. Thought that would work...

KRATOS
What did Odin do with your other eye?

MIMIR'S HEAD
He'd have kept it... in any of a hundred places, I'm afraid.

ATREUS
We've come so far. There has to be a way.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Look... bit of a long shot, but for years I'd see Sindri, sometimes Brok, lurking around on that mountain when Odin came for his visits. Maybe they know something?

ATREUS
Brok and Sindri!

INT. TÝR'S TEMPLE/BROK'S SHOP (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Kratos and Atreus approach Brok & Sindri's shop counter—

ATREUS
Hey, guys. Question for you—anyone know where we can find Mimir's other eye?

Sindri is immediately so nauseous he can barely speak.

SINDRI
Ohhh.... That's... I'm sorry. As a matter of fact, Odin asked me to... he wanted me to build a... he *showed* it to me and I... declined. Sorry, will you excuse me—

Sindri EXITS suddenly.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Well, that was useless.

BROK
You *know*... it was about that same time that Odin came around lookin' for me to build a statue with some sort of hidden compartment. Now, that not being a weapon and the Aesir being a bunch of pock-speckled cockers. I too saw fit to decline. But I know he got it built just the same.

ATREUS
What was the statue?

BROK
Eh, it's that one of Thor, out there flashin' his sac to the lake.

KRATOS
(annoyed)
The statue that the serpent ate.

SINDRI
(walking back up)
Sorry about that. Feeling much better.

ATREUS
How are we supposed to look *inside* the snake?

MIMIR'S HEAD
We'd better go see what the World Serpent has to say about that.

EXT/INT. LAKE OF NINE/TÝR'S TEMPLE (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

As they exit back onto the Realm Travel Bridge—

MIMIR'S HEAD
Once more to the horn...

As Kratos turns the crank for the lift to the horn, Mimir ad-libs a few "vocal warmup" style noises to prepare for speaking the strange language.

MIMIR'S HEAD
[Practicing vocal warm-ups]
(completing his "vocal warmup")
Ready!

KRATOS hold the lips of MIMIR'S HEAD to the HORN OF JÖRMUNGANDR. Atreus plugs his ears as the head blows a sustained DEEP MYSTICAL NOTE that echoes across the vast lake.

The WORLD SERPENT leans forward to observe his audience.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Thooooor stuh-tooooo... eeeee-kneeeee smooooo-thooooo thooooor-fah.
(translation, do not subtitle)
The statue of Thor you swallowed earlier... there is something inside they need to complete their journey.

WORLD SERPENT
Skeeeeel-yaaaaah. Pvooooo-meeeee-thooooor...
(translation, do not subtitle)
I see. As unpleasant as it sounds, they are welcome to row into my stomach, and find what they seek.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Ohhhh.

The World Serpent backs away and leans down, placing his head at water level and opening his huge mouth.

KRATOS
Is the statue lost to us?
MIMIR'S HEAD
Uhh, he thinks it might still be in his stomach. Um... and he's open to letting you row into his mouth to look inside.

ATREUS
Eyoo. Really?

MIMIR'S HEAD
By the by, he's not wild about it either.

KRATOS
(considering it)
Mmmh...

He starts towards the BOAT DOCK.

ATREUS
So... are we really doing this? Letting the serpent... swallow us?

KRATOS
You do not have to come.

ATREUS
Well, I'm not gonna MISS it...

On leaving the dock closest to the serpent—

ATREUS
You... *sure* this is a good idea?

KRATOS
No.

As they get closer to the World Serpent's open mouth, we see a pair of MASSIVE FANGS framing his maw—throat contracting far off in the distance, suggesting a very bad fate ahead.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Well, brothers... I've been to many strange places... but this will be a new one.

ATREUS
Heh... yeah, I've never been in a Giant's belly either. How about you, father?

KRATOS
Never one that was not trying to eat me.

MIMIR'S HEAD
We really should expect that sort of response at this point.

They glide into the serpent's open mouth. Atreus eyeballs the ENORMOUS FANGS flanking him as they float into the DARKNESS of the snake's body.

ATREUS
Here we go...

The serpent's JAWS close behind them.

INT. SERPENT'S BELLY (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Kratos holds up the Bifröst and its LIGHT illuminates a CAVERNOUS STOMACH around him, half-filled with BILE that BUBBLES and SMOKES. The cavern is littered with objects too solid to be broken down by the stomach acids: HALF-EATEN BOATS, WINE BARRELS, and BOAT CHAINS.

Kratos puts the Bifröst back on his belt and picks up the oar.

ATREUS
Funny... I used to dream about getting eaten.

KRATOS
Dreams are nothing to f—

ATREUS
(interrupting, but not angry)
I'm not afraid. It just reminded me of a way I used to feel. When I was a child.

Kratos processes this.

On picking up a floating collectible in the snake's belly —

ATREUS
Ouch... the water kind of burns in here. That is water, isn't it?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Aye... most of it...

Kratos rows around the cavernous stomach in search of the Thor Statue. He navigates through a SEA OF WINE BARRELS, MILES OF KELP, and a GRAVEYARD OF BOATS.

On spotting the Hammer of Thor's Statue—

KRATOS
There—the hammer.

Around the corner, we see THOR'S STATUE, half-submerged, but FACE and HAMMER quite visible.

As they ride a platform around to where they can climb up—

ATREUS
Mimir... any idea where Odin hid your eye?

MIMIR'S HEAD
No. It's not like I can still see through it.

The reach the hammer, and notice a CHEST. Kratos reaches in and holds up MIMIR'S EYE.

ATREUS
Yep. That's an eye.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Maybe you should stick that in my head for safe keeping.

Kratos brings Mimir off his hip with his other hand, bringing him eye-to-eye.

MIMIR'S HEAD (CONT'D)
Gently now, gently...

Kratos pushes the eye into Mimir's empty socket. It immediately starts looking around.

MIMIR'S HEAD (CONT'D)
Thank you, brother. You don't miss *depth* until it's gone.

Kratos returns Mimir to his hip. They ZIPLINE back to the boat and sail towards the mouth.

ATREUS
How's it feel, Mimir?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Well, I wouldn't say I'm feeling whole again, but it's a right improvement.

KRATOS
The Bifröst is intact?

MIMIR'S HEAD
It'll serve.

KRATOS
Then we have all we need.

ATREUS
Finally, we're going to Jötunheim. There's no stopping us now.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Laddy, have you ever heard the term "tempting fate"..?

ATREUS
Fate is another lie told by the gods.

MIMIR'S HEAD
(overlapping)
...told by the gods, yes, of course. You really are your father's son, you know.

As Kratos rows back toward the mouth—

ATREUS
So how do we get back out?

KRATOS
We signal the—

The side wall of the snake BOWS INWARD as a sudden BOOM reverberates around them, ECHOING in the cavernous interior of the snake, causing the boat to rock violently.

KRATOS
Hold on!

MIMIR'S HEAD
What's going on?!

KRATOS
(urgently)
Something is wrong.

The boat is rocked by another BOOM. The WATER SLOSHES, and the GURGLING builds to a DEAFENING ROAR. LOUD BOOMS and IMPACT WAVES ripple across the snake's flesh—like he's taking a beating.

Kratos and Atreus listen without speaking. It's like they're in a bomb shelter, listening to the city above bombarded by artillery fire. A BIG IMPACT causes the boat to rock even more violently than before.

MIMIR'S HEAD
The boat's shifting!

KRATOS
I have you!

Kratos catches Mimir before he can tumble into the water. The three of them plunge into DARKNESS.

The ROARING WATER and CONTROLLER RUMBLE reaches its fever pitch... with one more impact, BLINDING LIGHT erupts as the WORLD SERPENT opens his mouth to speak in a DEAFENING VOICE.

WORLD SERPENT
Maaaaaaaaaah-doooooooooh-tooooooooooh...
(translation, do not subtitle)
Impossible...

Our party is propelled into the empty white light. The boat SPLINTERS into debris that falls as the FROZEN TERRAIN rushes up toward them.

29. BALDUR'S CURSE

EXT/INT. NJÖRDHOLM/DOCKS BY THE FROZEN LAKE (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Landing hard on the ice, Kratos gets his bearings and STANDS just in time to see the World Serpent's massive head falling toward a large bluff.

KRATOS
Boy?

Atreus sits up from a PILE OF DEBRIS, SPITTING out a mouthful of SNOW.

ATREUS
Pffah—! I'm good... I'm getting kind of used to this.

The boy peers up at the towering WORLD SERPENT, who appears knocked out before them.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
What happened to him? Something *we* did?

KRATOS
(on alert)
No. Something else...

He turns around and notices they are standing near the STONEMASON'S CORPSE.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
The dead giant... why did the serpent leave us here?

Atreus grabs his father's arm and points to a FALCON flying above.

ATREUS
Look.

It swoops in, and on approach TRANSFORMS into FREYA, who lands on her feet elegantly.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
(whispers to Kratos)
Freya. We can still trust her... right?

KRATOS
(whispers to Atreus)
Until we know for certain... keep your distance.

She approaches them, concerned, looking over at the unconscious Jörmungandr nearby.

FREYA
The World Serpent... what happened here?

ATREUS
We hoped *you* would know.

KRATOS
You are far from home.

FREYA
I'm looking for my son. The two of you... you helped me see things more clearly.

KRATOS
You do not know where he is then?

FREYA
No. But the woods and fields speak his name. I know he walks here in Midgard.

ATREUS
(cold, accusatory)
When you see him last?

She's accustomed to suspicion from Kratos, but not from the boy... and it throws her for a loop.

FREYA
Long ago... before you were even born. Why are you standing so far from me? What's wrong?
(dawning realization)

FREYA (CONT'D)
Something's happened...

Atreus draws his BOW suddenly, and points it at something OFFSCREEN.

ATREUS
There!

They turn to see BALDUR, emerging from the icy water below where the World Serpent fell. He strides towards them.

BALDUR
I had a feeling hurting the big snake would bring you two out in the open. Do you have any idea, any idea at all, what you have cost me?

Freya emerges from behind Kratos and takes a few steps towards her son. Her face changes instantly at the sight of him, eyes verging on tears. It's been decades since she's seen him.

FREYA
My boy...

He stops in his tracks and looks at her with confusion and contempt.

BALDUR
Mother?

FREYA
I'm here. Don't run away.

BALDUR
Oh, I'm not going anywhere, mother.

FREYA
I know that you're still angry. I know that how you feel hasn't changed, but I want you to—

BALDUR
How I feel?

Baldur looks even crazier than he normally looks; Helheim has clearly taken its toll on his mind.

BALDUR (CONT'D)
How I *feel?* I've spent the last one hundred years dreaming of this moment... I've rehearsed everything I'd ever wanted to say to you, every word, to make you understand exactly what you stole from me. But now I realize... I don't need you to understand *anything*. I don't need you at all.

Baldur takes a few bloodthirsty steps towards Freya, but Kratos steps between them. Freya puts her hand on his shoulder, as if to move him out of the way—

FREYA
(to Kratos)
No! Back off, Kratos. This has nothing to do—

Freya stops as she realizes Kratos is trying to de-escalate and talk sense into Baldur.

KRATOS
This path you walk... vengeance. You will find no peace. I *know*.

Baldur rejects Kratos' attempt to resolve things peacefully—

BALDUR
You... I'll deal with you later. But family first.

He tries to advance past Kratos to Freya, but the God of War pushes him back.

BALDUR (CONT'D)
This again.

BOSS FIGHT BEGINS.

It's clear Baldur is intent on killing his mother, so Atreus pleads with her to escape—

ATREUS
(urgently)
You *have* to go—please!

FREYA
(projected, from a distance)
No! I can reach him! You have to stop fighting!

Freya turns into a falcon and flies up to the top of the ruined structure flanking the icy battlefield.

Freya casts magic summoning MAGICAL ROOTS to erupt from the icy ground, binding the two warring gods until they can struggle to freedom and resume the fight.

BALDUR
You and your magic... I hate you!

On a subsequent ROOT SPELL, KRATOS is quickly ensnared up to the chest, but this time BALDUR anticipates the magic of his mother. He dives to the side, grabs a small ICE ROCK and hurls it at FREYA.

Freya deftly cocoons herself in a tangle of roots, protecting herself from her son's attack. The rock ricochets off, but it keeps her distracted for a moment.

ATREUS rushes to his father's side and starts cutting away at the roots with his HUNTING KNIFE. Baldur coolly walks toward the trapped Kratos.

BALDUR (CONT'D)
You might want to turn away, son. This won't be pretty.

The boy stops cutting at the roots, and stands. He faces Baldur, knife still out, in front of Kratos.

ATREUS
(defiantly)
I won't let you hurt him.

KRATOS
No, boy...

BALDUR
Fine.

Baldur runs at Atreus as Kratos breaks free of the roots with a final pull.

KRATOS
STOP!!!

Baldur PUNCHES the kid square in the chest. Atreus flies back, right into Kratos' arms, who catches him.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
NO!!

Atreus WHEEZES, unable to answer, wind knocked out of him. Kratos checks the boy's chest, and draws back a BLOODY HAND. The front of his SHIRT and QUIVER STRAP are covered in BLOOD.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
(desperately)
No... Atreus... you're bleeding. Breathe, boy... breathe!

Atreus shakes his head, and, between LABORED BREATHS, manages to say—

ATREUS
(out of breath)
Not... my blood...

They look over to Baldur.

Baldur stands in place, holding his hand, staring at it. It's a BLOODY MESS—an ARROWHEAD and WOOD SPLINTERS stick out of his fist at odd angles.

BALDUR
What is this? I can feel this... I can feel *everything*.

A THIN LAYER of MAGICAL ENCHANTMENT—only visible where it's dissolving—melts off Baldur, yawning open in patches like burning celluloid. We watch as Freya's enchantment begins to erode off Baldur's body while he stares in amazement. He begins to LAUGH.

FREYA (O.S.)
NO!!

Freya has emerged from her cocoon, and is watching from a distance, horrified.

ATREUS
(catching his breath, in awe)
He's— vulnerable now?

Baldur SMILES as the last of the enchantment dissipates. His wish to feel again has finally come true. But he tamps down his emotions as he remembers there's a fight to win. He turns grimly to face Kratos and Atreus as they ready their WEAPONS.

Vines wrap around Baldur's torso as he's forcibly pulled away from Kratos and Atreus.

BALDUR
(furious)
No! Mother!

FREYA (CONT'D)
YOU WILL NOT DO THIS!!!

Freya SLAMS her palm to the ground, and the screen SHAKES with SEISMIC RUMBLINGS. An ENORMOUS SILHOUETTE emerges in the far distance behind her. We RACK FOCUS to reveal THAMUR THE GIANT STONEMASON'S CORPSE, reanimated by Freya's ancient *seiðr* magic, looking at them through the twilight mists. The scale is ridiculous.

Thamur's TREMENDOUS HAND creates a massive SHADOW as it reaches down and scoops up Kratos and Atreus, cutting them off from Baldur and Freya. They are enveloped in DARKNESS.

ATREUS
What's going on?!? Is Freya trying to kill us?

KRATOS
No. Do you hear the wind? We are moving.

ATREUS
That arrow... Baldur punched... the mistletoe...?

KRATOS
In the quiver's strap, yes. Mistletoe harmed him..?

ATREUS
Freya said it was wicked...

MIMIR'S HEAD
He's more than harmed—the spell is broken!

KRATOS
He can be killed?

MIMIR'S HEAD
I'm certain of it. It's all coming back now...

ATREUS
NOW he remembers!

BRIGHT LIGHT blinds Kratos and Atreus as they are released from Thamur's grasp. They stand, face to enormous face with the dead Giant.

ATREUS
Look, there she is!

We see her off in the distance, controlling the Stonemason magically from afar.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
She's controlling this thing??

FREYA/STONEMASON
(through the Stonemason)
Stay out of it! I can reason with him.

KRATOS
No, woman! You cannot. He means to kill you!

BALDUR (O.S)
You can't stop me. NO ONE CAN.

Kratos and son go Back to Back.

ATREUS
Where is he?

FREYA/STONEMASON
(through the Stonemason)
I don't care if he kills me. I WILL protect him. I WILL NOT LET HIM DIE!

BALDUR (O.S)
How touching...

Baldur lunges in from off-screen with a flying punch, which Kratos blocks with his shield.

Baldur and Kratos face off again, but this time Baldur feels everything. These new sensations are intoxicating; the rush of adrenaline, the pain of his enemy's blade, the feel of his fist connecting a punch... He is loving every minute of this.

BALDUR
I never knew how much FUN this could be! Killing you is going to feel so rewarding now!

Kratos catchers Baldur in the side with his BLADES, then hurls him across the arena. He tries to chase after him, but the Freya-controlled Stonemason blocks his path with his hand.

FREYA/STONEMASON
You. Will. STOP!

Kratos LIFTS Thamur's RING, revealing a SHATTER CRYSTAL, as Baldur picks himself up and CHARGES.

KRATOS
Boy! The crystal.

Player must hit square to explode the crystal, sending everyone flying.

As they resume the melee, Kratos throws his AXE into Baldur's chest, sending him flying to the other end of the arena. Kratos recalls the axe and charges ahead to finish his foe.

As Kratos runs, the reanimated Stonemason rises up and pulls the CHISEL out of his head.

FREYA/STONEMASON
(pulling the chisel out)
Nnngghhh.... NO!!!

The glowing chisel SLAMS down between Kratos and Baldur. The shockwave pushes Kratos back, whereas Baldur sees an opportunity to reach his mother. He's in a frenzy at this point.

BALDUR
MOTHER!!!

He scrambles up the chisel.

BALDUR (CONT'D)
I'LL KILL YOU!!!!

Kratos climbs to follow Baldur, and as the chisel is lifted, he calls out to Atreus on a nearby ledge.

KRATOS
Atreus!

Atreus fires an arrow that trips up Baldur, buying Kratos time to catch up and tackle him. He keeps shooting into Baldur's back as he wrestles with Kratos.

FREYA/STONEMASON
Please... there has been enough pain.

BALDUR
Shut UP, MOTHER!

Thamur tips the chisel, and everyone rolls towards the edge. Kratos grabs hold of Baldur's foot with one hand and Atreus' leg with the other. Baldur laughs manically as he repeatedly kicks Kratos in the face, while Atreus lines up a shot that lands square in Baldur's chest.

Kratos flings his son up and over to fire another shot, mid-air, into Baldur's abdomen.

Kratos picks up Baldur and gets him in a chokehold. Kratos and son exchange a look, and Kratos jumps off backwards from the Chisel. As they fall through the air, Atreus jumps after them and releases several arrows into Baldur. They pass by Thamur's horrified face—

FREYA/STONEMASON
NOO!!

They land on the Giant's shoulder, and Kratos slams Baldur's face into the ground. Baldur reverses the hold, flipping Kratos beneath him and putting his hands around his neck.

ATREUS
(straining)
Get... offa him!

Atreus jumps on Baldur and starts choking him with his bow. Baldur grabs the bow and head-butts Atreus to knock him off, then grabs him with one arm. He is now choking both Atreus and Kratos, while Kratos chokes him with his left hand. A 3-way choke.

BALDUR
Before you die, I want to thank you. Both of you. You've done what even the Allfather himself could not. I've never felt more alive!
(He bears down harder on both them)
Ironic, isn't it?

Kratos' rage meter fills, and he goes into RAGE MODE.

KRATOS
GRYYAHHH!

Kratos gets the upper hand, and PUNCHES Baldur into the final arena, on the Stonemason's gauntlet.

BALDUR
What?! NO!

Kratos and son jump into the arena, ready for business.

BALDUR (CONT'D)
WHY WON'T YOU DIE!

Baldur punches Kratos into the air. Kratos flings his chain blades at Baldur, and pulls himself right back to the ground on top of him. Kratos and Atreus land alternating blows on Baldur until he falls. Kratos straddles him and pounds his face bloody. Freya has had enough, and summons an Ice Breath Spell:

FREYA/STONEMASON
Frjósa!

Freya, through the Stonemason, blows a massive FROST BLAST to separate Kratos from Baldur. As they slide, Kratos quickly moves in front of Atreus to take the brunt of the cold.

Out of the corner of his eye, Atreus notices something in the distance.

ATREUS
(to Kratos)
Look! I have an idea!
(shouted)
Mooooog-taaaaaaay-oooooom!
(translation, do not subtitle)
Please! Help us!

KRATOS
("what did you do?")
Boy?

From offscreen, the WORLD SERPENT circles in around the Stonemason.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Well done, boy!

The Serpent lets out a DEEP HISS—and BITES down on Thamur's skull. The ground beneath them gives way and again they fall, landing back to the ice near the RINGED HAND of the Giant's corpse.

Atreus rolls through, clearly unharmed by the fall. Also landing with a THUD is Baldur, beaten, and unable to get up. Freya too falls to their level, knocked down by the shockwaves of the Serpent's attack.

KRATOS runs to Baldur and wraps his hands around his throat, determined to choke the life out of him while he has the chance. FREYA watches from the ground nearby, weakened and exhausted, unable to summon the energy to stop him.

BALDUR
Come on... do it.

FREYA
Stop... please...

Kratos does not relent... until Atreus speaks—

ATREUS
He's beaten, father... not a threat.

Kratos holds his grip, and tries to declare the terms of his mercy.

KRATOS
You will not come for us again. You will not touch her.

FREYA
I don't need your protection.

He looks at Freya. She stares back at him, disappointed, hurt, broken. Kratos releases Baldur and stands.

Kratos turns his back, and walks away. Atreus looks at her sadly, and follows his father out. They EXIT.

The camera finds Baldur in the foreground as he slowly rises to face Freya in the background.

BALDUR
Just can't help yourself, can you mother? No matter what I do or say. You won't stop interfering in my life.

FREYA
I was trying to protect you. I was...

She stops, knowing she's just spouting the same old excuses.

FREYA (CONT'D)
I've made mistakes, I know... but you're *free* now. You have what you want. Try to find forgiveness... we can build something new.

BALDUR
No. No, we can't. Because I will *never* forgive you. You still need to pay for the lifetime that you stole from me.

FREYA
I *have* paid... I have *paid*. But if that alone will make you whole... if seeing me dead will make things right... I won't stop you.

She looks up, and he's standing next to her. She opens her arms.

BALDUR
I know.

Baldur wraps his hands around his mother's throat.

ATREUS (O.S.)
(disbelief)
What? No! Father...

FREYA
(whispers)
I love you...

Freya closes her eyes. Baldur begins to strangle her, ignoring the sound of FOOTSTEPS bearing down on him. A second later, Kratos is there. He pulls Baldur away from his mother, locking him in a reverse choke hold. Baldur struggles to free himself.

BALDUR
(struggling)
Why... why do you even care? You could have... walked away.

KRATOS
The cycle ends here. We must be better than this.

In one final, quick move, Kratos snaps Baldur's neck. They dying god slowly drops to his knees— a trickle of BLOOD bubbling from his lips. A SNOWFLAKE lands on Baldur's face. He winces at the feeling, and then SMILES faintly.

BALDUR
Snow...

The life drains from his face, and he falls DEAD, revealing Freya behind him. She runs to Baldur's DEAD BODY as fat FLAKES OF SNOW fall around them. First, only a few... then more.

FREYA
(sobbing)
No, no, no, no... My boy... my dear, sweet, boy...

KRATOS
(remorsefully)
Freya... he chose this.

Kratos watches her. Atreus steps up and joins his father, looking battle-scarred and grown-up.

FREYA
I will rain every agony, every violation imaginable, upon you. I will parade your cold body from every corner of

FREYA (CONT'D)
every realm, and feed your soul to the vilest filth in Hel. That is my promise.

ATREUS
He saved your life!

FREYA
(to Atreus)
He robbed me of everything! Everything...
(to Kratos)
You are just an animal... passing on your cruelty and rage. You will *never* change.

KRATOS
Then you do not know me.

FREYA
I know enough. Does he?

Kratos addresses the boy, over his shoulder, but keeps his eyes on Freya.

KRATOS
Boy, listen close: I am from a land called Sparta. I made a deal with a god that cost me my soul. I killed many who were deserving... and many who were not.

Kratos finally turns to Atreus.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
I killed my father.

Atreus takes this in.

ATREUS
That was your father in Hel...
(shaking his head)
Is this what it is to be a god? Is this how it always ends? Sons killing their mothers... their fathers?

KRATOS
No. We will be the gods we choose to be, not those who have been. Who I was is not who you will be. *We must be better.*

Atreus nods, convinced and relieved.

Behind them, Freya stands up, carrying her son's lifeless body. She stares deeply at Kratos and Atreus, anger and devastating sadness radiating from her face. She almost speaks... but turns her back on them and walks away. EXIT FREYA.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Well... guess we're the bad guys now.

KRATOS
In her eyes, yes. But she could never make that choice.

Atreus looks at Kratos, unsure of what to say.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
We should finish this journey while I still have strength.

EXT. LAKE OF NINE/THE MASON'S CHANNEL (MIDGARD) – DAY (CONTINUOUS)

As they begin the trek back from Njördholm—

ATREUS
I don't understand... I *know* saving her was the right thing, but she seemed all evil at the end.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Not evil. You killed her son, lad. Her son. The death of a child is not something a parent gets over easily.

ATREUS
But he was gonna kill her!

KRATOS
She would have died to see him live. Only a parent can understand.

ATREUS
So you'd let me kill *you?*

KRATOS
If it meant you would live... yes.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Look, there was no easy choice, for anybody, brother. But I think we can all agree you did the right thing. The world's a better place with Freya in it. Just... give her time, lads. She'll come around.

KRATOS
Back to Tyr's temple then. One last time.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Aye... Jötunheim awaits!

As they continue the trip back to the temple—

ATREUS
Why did Baldur say we cost him?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Odin must have convinced him that following you to Jötunheim would bring his cure. Lies, I'm sure.

ATREUS
Why *did* Mistletoe break the spell?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Vanir magic is powerful, but its rules are slippery and elusive. Baldur was the greatest gift Odin granted Freya; She only hoped to spare him pain, and spare herself loss—but such impulses can lead good parents to make terribly stupid decisions

30. A WISH FULFILLED

INT. TÝR'S TEMPLE/REALM TRAVEL ROOM (MIDGARD/JÖTUNHEIM) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Kratos inserts the BIFRÖST into the slot on the REALM TRAVEL TABLE, activating the device. He TURNS the table to the new JÖTUNHEIM TOWER.

KRATOS
Boy. The head... get ready.

ATREUS
Oh, right.

Atreus grabs MIMIR'S HEAD off of his father's belt.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Got him.

He begins running over to the spot where the Jötunheim Crystal should be.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Let's hope this doesn't cause you to explode or anything.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Oh. Hadn't considered that. Maybe we should talk about this a bit more.

Atreus gets into position on the CIRCULAR PLATFORM.

ATREUS
Nah. I'm sure you'll be fine.
(to Kratos, calling out)
Ready!

Atreus lifts Mimir above his head as Kratos locks the destination into the table and starts the sequence. A beam of PRISMATIC LIGHT shoot across the room and into MIMIR'S EYES.

MIMIR'S HEAD
(strained)
Oop—that's unpleasant!

Mimir's head absorbs a ridiculous amount of energy.

KRATOS
(calling out)
Now, boy!

Atreus pivots, holding Mimir's POWERED UP HEAD in front of him while trying to shield his eyes as best as he can.

The energy EXPLODES out of Mimir's eyes, striking the center of the Jötunheim bridge door. The doors SHUDDER for a moment, then erupt in GLITTERING LIGHT., revealing a glittering, GOLDEN STAIRCASE leading up and out of view.

Kratos takes Mimir's now-depleted head, and hooks it back onto his belt.

KRATOS
We must be close.

Kratos gives Atreus a pat on the shoulder. Atreus trots ahead a few steps.

ATREUS
(excited)
Well... what are we waiting for? You think it's far?

KRATOS
We will see.

As they start up the golden staircase, Mimir's Head speaks from Kratos' belt.

MIMIR'S HEAD
A word, please, before we continue...

Kratos stops and holds up MIMIR'S HEAD.

MIMIR'S HEAD (CONT'D)
Listen... the last thing you two need up there's a decomposing head ruining the moment. Why don't I wait for you here. This is between you and the boy.

KRATOS
True. But if someone were to find you—

BROK (O.S.)
By Lady Sif's soft, perfect sloshers!

They both turn to see BROK and SINDRI standing next to them.

BROK (CONT'D)
You done did it!

SINDRI
(sheepishly)
Sorry. We had to see this.

Kratos looks at the Huldra Bros., then back at Mimir's Head, and an idea begins to formulate.

MIMIR'S HEAD
(anticipating the idea)
Oh-no, no, no, no, no, no... Fine, damn it, FINE.

KRATOS
Watch the head til we return.

Kratos throws Mimir's Head at Sindri...

SINDRI
I can do this. No... No, I can't.

...who immediately passes it to Brok.

BROK
Okay?

KRATOS
(turning to Atreus)
Ready? Come.

Atreus nods excitedly with a smile, and they start up the golden stairs into the sky...

EXT. GIANT'S FINGERS/BRIDGE (JÖTUNHEIM) – DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Kratos and Atreus reach the top of the GOLDEN STAIRCASE. They are now near the top of a mountain. Nearby, a BRIDGE crosses over an expanse of FOG-COVERED HILLS, stretching out to the horizon.

ATREUS
(disbelief)
Look... we're on the Giant's Fingers. I can see the highest peak ahead—right over there. We *did* it.

KRATOS
(relieved)
We did.

Kratos takes off the BANDAGES on his forearms, exposing to the sunlight his wounds that never heal.

ATREUS
(noticing, confused)
What are you doing?

KRATOS
I have nothing more to hide.

He discards the bandages, and a MOUNTAIN WIND takes them.

ATREUS
Can we go now? We're so close!

Atreus takes off excitedly up the MOUNTAIN PATH...

KRATOS
Boy...

The boy stops, looking at him, confused.

Kratos pulls the LEATHER POUCH containing the MOTHER'S ASHES from his belt, and holds it out. Atreus looks at it, but doesn't take it. His father kneels down and hands it to him.

KRATOS (CONT'D)
Carry her.

Atreus delicately takes the pouch, and smiles at his father with a nod of gratitude. He loops it carefully on his belt, as he turns to proceed across the bridge.

As Kratos and Atreus cross the bridge—

ATREUS
(vaguely concerned)
Hm...

KRATOS
Boy?

ATREUS
It's nothing... I just thought I'd hear voices by now.

Crossing the bridge, they approach an abandoned JÖTUNN SHRINE constructed within the mountain—beyond it, the path to the mountain's highest point. The vista is strangely familiar, the bridge and shrine were shown to Kratos inside the LIGHT OF ALFHEIM.

EXT/INT. GIANT'S FINGERS/SHRINE (JÖTUNHEIM) – DAY (CONTINUOUS)

The inside of the shrine is lined with EERIE STATUES of Giants — a few standing humanoid statues, and dozens more FACES carved into the walls.

As he walks in the door, Atreus is already calling out—

ATREUS
(calling out)
Hello? Anybody here?

They approach a statue of a standing giant helping a kneeling giant.

KRATOS
What is this place?

ATREUS
They must have all come through here when they left Midgard. What was left of them.

They examine a wall full of carved FACES.

KRATOS
Why carve all these faces?

ATREUS
What if this is all of the Giants that got out of Midgard alive? Not really many at all...

They find another wall with more and more carved faces of Giants.

KRATOS
Where are they now?

ATREUS
The Giants came back home so they could survive. But I'm not sure they did.

As they begin to ascend a stairway—

ATREUS
I should feel them... but I don't. This place is dead. What happened to them? Why'd mom send us here?

KRATOS
One question is answered and two more take its place...

KRATOS walks into a LARGE CRACK along a STONE WALL; Atreus follows not far behind. As Atreus steps into the fissure, his hand brushes the wall.

Upon his touch, a bright LATTICEWORK OF LIGHT spiderwebs out along the wall. Atreus stops and watches as the latticework of light continues to grow from his hand, revealing a SERIES OF IMAGES carved along the entirety of the stone wall. The art is the same style as the SACRED GIANT TRIPTYCHS.

ATREUS
Wait! Father... something's happening...

Kratos returns to find Atreus looking at a WALL CARVING of a WOMAN standing defiantly before a COUNCIL OF GIANTS, holding in her hand the LEVIATHAN AXE.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
(not believing what he's seeing)
It's your axe. It's *mother*... Look, she's arguing with a bunch of Giants.
(confused)
She knew Giants?

Before Kratos can answer, the boy races impatiently to the next image on the other side of the crevasse. It shows Atreus and Kratos standing before the WORLD SERPENT. Atreus is framed more prominently than his father, with Kratos relegated to status of background player (in this, and *all* the mural images).

ATREUS (CONT'D)
That's us... the first time we met the World Serpent. But how...?

Kratos stares at the image, dumbstruck and baffled.

Atreus darts to the next carving on the wall: It shows the boy aiming an ARROW at Baldur as he grapples with Kratos.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
And our fight with Baldur. But that just happened. Wait—they knew everything that was going to happen. The dragon in the mountain, the Stonemason, all these drawings... this is our story.

KRATOS
No... This is *your* story.

ATREUS
(dazed)
But... what does it all mean?

KRATOS
That I was not the only parent with secrets...

Atreus looks at his father, the implications sinking in.

ATREUS
She was a Giant...

Atreus steps back from the mural, looking around, reeling.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
I'm a Giant.

Atreus looks to his father.

ATREUS
Did you know?

Kratos shakes his head. Atreus returns to the mural, framing with his father an image of FAYE'S PYRE.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
Why didn't she tell us?

KRATOS
She sent us here knowing we would find this.

ATREUS
But why not just tell us the truth?

KRATOS
Your mother would have had good reasons.
KRATOS (CONT'D)
(dawning realization)
Baldur was never sent to find me. He was tracking *her* all along... not knowing she was only ashes.

ATREUS
If she had a plan for us, I trust it. Whatever it is. Besides, she hasn't been wrong yet.
(starting for the exit)
Come on, we're so close to the end now.

Kratos' gaze lingers on the final image of the mural—a fragment that's only partially intact. It shows an enigmatic image of the future—Atreus holding a DEAD BODY. He looks up at the sky, weeping, cursing. The rest of the fragment is destroyed, so the identity of the corpse remains a mystery.

KRATOS
(distracted by the image)
Yes... yes, we are.

He turns back to the boy, and THEY EXIT.

Atreus runs ahead, out the door, and stops to examine a GOLDEN HAND PRINT — one exactly like those we saw at the beginning of the game. As Kratos approaches—

ATREUS
Look... it's mother's. She was here. She saw every step we took before we took it. Like she was always with us... watching over us... leading us home.
(resolved)
Let's finish it.

EXT. GIANT'S FINGERS/SUMMIT (JÖTUNHEIM) – DAY (CONTINUOUS)

KRATOS & ATREUS keep climbing until reach the "tip" of the finger. Morning-stained CLOUDS stretch off as far as the eye can see. Here there is only peace and calm.

Atreus runs ahead to the edge, awestruck at the view. Kratos approaches his son.

ATREUS
Father?

Atreus offers him the ASHES.

KRATOS
No. We do it together, son.

They release the ashes as father and son. The ashes spiral away from them, carried by a breeze into the distance, a sparkling of magic in their wake.

KRATOS
Goodbye, Faye.

ATREUS
I love you, mom.

Atreus stares out at a GRAVEYARD OF GIANTS, coming into focus as fog clears the hills below.

ATREUS
(sadly)
The Giants... they really are all gone. There's nothing for us here.

Kratos slowly turns, and takes the first steps of a long journey home.

KRATOS
Come.

Atreus nods, and walks alongside his father. They move slowly, gathering their thoughts.

ATREUS
So... I get that mother was a Giant. Which makes me part Giant and part God.

KRATOS
And part mortal.

ATREUS
Right. I guess there's just one thing I don't understand. My name on the wall—

Atreus stops for a moment and Kratos stops with him.

ATREUS (CONT'D)
The Giants called me... "Loki"?

KRATOS
(puzzled)
Loki?
(remembering)
That was the name your mother wanted for you when you were born. She must have called you that to her people.

ATREUS
But—why?

KRATOS

A question for another day. Let us go home.

31. EPILOGUE

EXT/INT. GIANT'S FINGERS/SHRINE (JÖTUNHEIM) – DAY (CONTINUOUS)

As they begin to descend, as EARLY CREDITS ROLL—

ATREUS
Guess it all makes sense now. Why she'd want to end up here. Be with her kind. But... did she know it was going to be like this here? Is this what she wanted us to see? Did she want us to tell people, or keep it a secret?

KRATOS
I... do not know.

ATREUS
So what should we do?

KRATOS
I trust *you* to decide that.

ATREUS
Oh!

As they re-enter the Shrine—

ATREUS
So... why'd you want to name me Atreus? I know it can't be for a God.

KRATOS
(A grunt that passes for a chuckle.)
Hah. No. He was a soldier. A Spartan.

ATREUS
A great warrior?

KRATOS
All Spartans are great warriors. We train from birth. Our lives were discipline, duty, battle, and death. Life was grim, and we greeted it grimly.

ATREUS
(*that sounds about right...*)
Mm-hmm.

KRATOS
But Atreus of Sparta was unlike the rest of us. He wore a smile even in the worst of times. He was... happy. He inspired us to hope... that though we were machines of war, yet there was humanity in us. Goodness. When the day came for him to lay down his life in battle, his sacrifice saved countless others, and turned the tide in our favor. I carried him home on his shield, and buried him with all the honors of Spartan custom. His memory was a comfort in dark times.

ATREUS
Wow. *You* actually told a good story. Mimir missed it!

On the golden stairs back to the Realm Travel Room—

ATREUS
I understand if you want to go home... but... maybe helping people was part of why mom sent us out here too. I mean... what would Atreus of Sparta do?

KRATOS
And what would Loki do?

ATREUS
Hunh... that's a weird name. I'm glad we went with yours.

INT. TÝR'S TEMPLE/REALM TRAVEL ROOM (JÖTUNHEIM/MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

At the bottom of the Jötunheim steps, just inside the Realm Travel Room doors, Mimir's Head is sitting on the floor.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Lads! Am I glad to see you. I believe I've reached my limit for dwarven charm.

Kratos kneels to pick up Mimir's Head.

ATREUS
What happened, Mimir?

MIMIR'S HEAD
They took an uncomfortable number of measurements, and then proceeded to bicker about the weather.

ATREUS
Where do you want us to take you?

MIMIR'S HEAD
How about the warm confines of anywhere-bloody-else?

Kratos returns Mimir's Head back to his belt. When the travel table is activated for Midgard—

MIMIR'S HEAD
Before we return to Midgard, I should warn you... more time has passed than you likely realize. And the snowfall that began when you slew Baldur... it's become something else—the stuff of omens.

KRATOS
Omens? For the coming of winter?

MIMIR'S HEAD
Not just any winter, but a great winter to span three summers—and when it's done, Ragnarök begins.

KRATOS
Ragnarök. From snow.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Aye. Snow, lots *more* snow, and then the end of the bloody world, in that approximate order.

KRATOS
(still reeling from the Jötunheim mural)
Another *prophecy*...

MIMIR'S HEAD
No, brother....Prophecy doesn't expect *this* for a hundred more winters at least. You've *changed* something. Prophecy didn't count on you.

INT. TÝR'S TEMPLE/BROK'S SHOP (MIDGARD) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

As they exit the Realm Travel Room, they begin to overhear Brok and Sindri arguing—

BROK
I'm telling you, it's Fimbulwinter. I can feel it in my scrote—this is the big one!

SINDRI
Stop saying that. Oh, you're making me very nervous. It was bound to snow sooner or later.

BROK
That ain't just snow, and you know it! It's the *end times*.

SINDRI
How *dare* you make me the voice of reason!

ATREUS
Guys?

SINDRI
Just discussing the weather. Bit of a cold snap lately.

BROK
What he means is, Fimbulwinter's upon us, boys! The winter to end all winters! I can feel it in my scrote!

ATREUS
Yeah, we... we heard.

SINDRI
So, if you're heading home... try to keep moving, and, also, to not die.

BROK
Or if you're not heading home... same advice.

EXT. REALM BETWEEN REALMS

While traveling home via the Realm Between Realms—

ATREUS
Mimir...what did you call mother? Laufey the Just? Did you *know* her?

MIMIR'S HEAD
I never had the pleasure. Laufey was a rumor in the halls of Asgard—a Giantess warrior who thwarted many an Aesir god's plans. Freeing those who they would enslave, feeding those who they would starve, generally making a nuisance of herself in the most *noble* of ways. Thor was terribly frustrated he could never find her to fight. Once my imprisonment began, I could only wonder what became of her, and who she would turn out to be. Yours is quite a singular lineage, lad.

EXT/INT. FOREST IÐUNN/KRATOS' HOUSE (MIDGARD) – DAY (CONTINUOUS)

As Kratos and Atreus exit the mystical gateway near their home in the Forest Iðunn—

ATREUS
We're finally home... feels like a lifetime ago.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Bit drafty maybe, but it's a right improvement over having tree bark in your tadger.

When the player presses Interact on the door—

KRATOS
Time to rest.

ATREUS
I'm gonna sleep through winter!

Kratos drop his axe on the floor and Atreus drops his bow as they sit down on their beds. Kratos sets down Mimir's Head.

MIMIR'S HEAD
Okay... this'll do.

KRATOS
Sleep.

ATREUS
Way ahead of you.

They lie down and close their eyes, a rest well-earned.

FADE TO BLACK

TITLE CARD: "Years Later..."

EXT/INT. FOREST IÐUNN/KRATOS' HOUSE (MIDGARD) – NIGHT

A night of sleep is suddenly and violently interrupted by roaring THUNDER and flashing LIGHTNING. Kratos scrambles to his feet, every muscle on alert. This is no storm.

ATREUS
What was that—?

KRATOS
Your bow..!

He looks to Kratos and they exchange a knowing glance. There will be no hiding in the cellar this time. Atreus picks up his BOW and QUIVER, silently notching an ARROW. Kratos grabs his AXE from a peg on the wall, and throws open the front door.

A HOODED FIGURE stands alone in the backyard, unfazed by the crashes of lightning around him.

The camera swings around behind the mysterious figure, settling into a "gunslinger duel" shot, with the figure's HEAVY CLOAK obscuring the right half of the frame, and Kratos and Atreus facing us on the left.

KRATOS
Who are you?!

He flips the cloak back to reveal the weapon hanging at his side—a HAMMER, furiously rippling with electric energy. There is no mistaking it—the hammer is MJÖLNIR, and the man bearing it is THOR.

CUT TO BLACK

FULL END CREDITS